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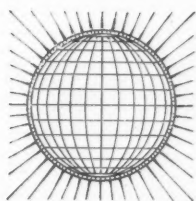
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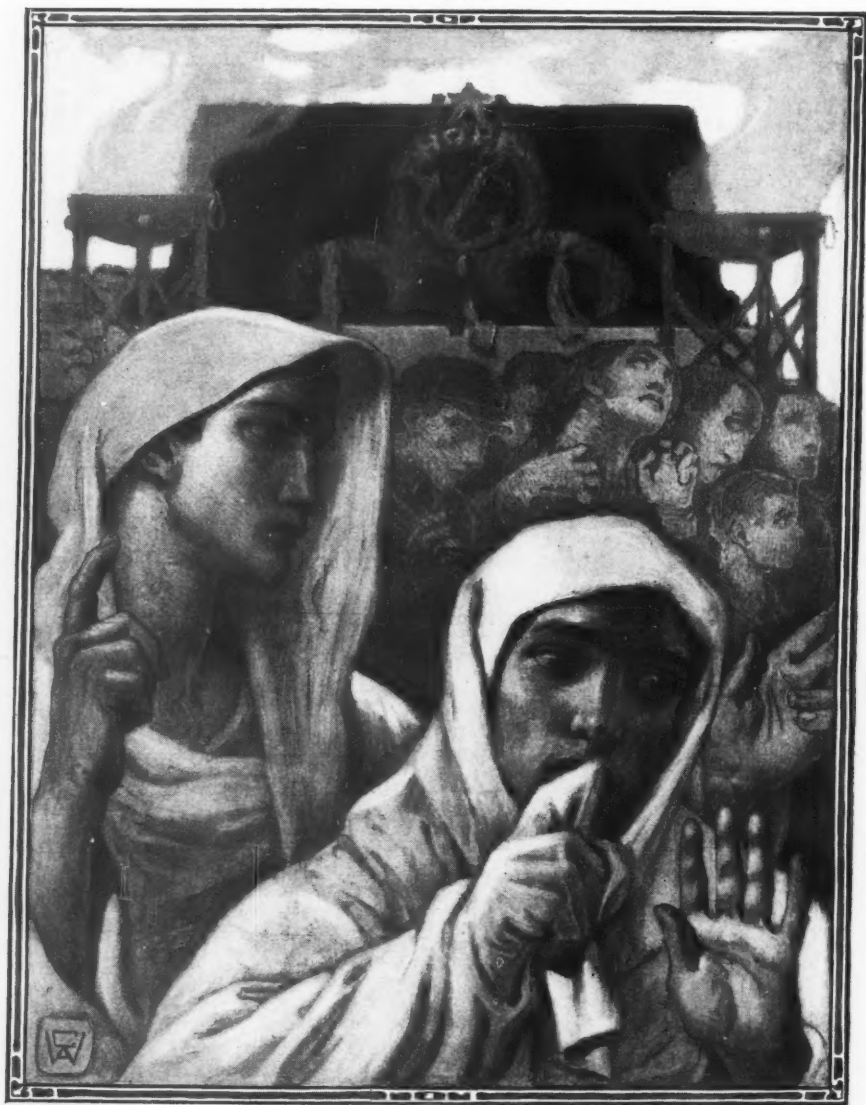
*It will be a pleasure to every **Cosmopolitan** reader to know that the magazine has now outstripped in circulation every general magazine published anywhere. **It is a great big success.** We want to make it bigger. We guarantee to do our share. Will you help? Read the little note we print in this issue on page 137*

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Nil Nisi Bonum

By Reginald Wright Kauffman

Drawing by Charles A. Winter



Filled as our lives are with daily shams, there is no more absurd and abominable sham about us than the mask of sorrow that we wear to the funeral of a rogue



ON'T be afraid to speak ill of the dead. NIL
No man that has lived should be saved NISI
from deserved criticism by the common- BONUM
place fact of ceasing to be alive. "I
should wish," said the Cardinal de
Bernis, "that every regard of politeness

be preserved for the living, but that it might be permitted to speak freely one's mind of the dead." From the lips of our unworthy teachers we have received a clutter of proverbial folly, and among all those follies there are few aphorisms better calculated to let bad-enough alone than that reverend command, "Concerning the dead, nothing but good."

Could anything be more ingenuous? Good men die as easily as bad ones, and yet the bad ask us to regard death as their excuse! Conceal your iniquity until you die, and your reputation is secure. Of course, if a villain is as long dead as Caligula, if the worst that he did has at last followed him into the grave, I may point out his wickedness—until some simple soul of an historical white-washer comes along with his brush and pail. But if a political boss dies to-day, I may not attack the infamous deeds that survive him and that continue to work out their evil while the earth is fresh above his corpse. If your senator bought his seat at Washington, you may say so at nine A. M.; but if, at nine fifteen, he falls, in a drunken stupor, from his train and is killed on his way to the capital, then you must not warn his successor, you must not expose the briber, because the briber is no more.

Let us look at this thing frankly. Filled as our lives are with daily shams, there is no more absurd and abominable sham about us than the mask of sorrow that we wear to the funeral of a rogue. As a matter of fact, the dead, being safe from physical punishment, should be the more open to such reprobation as their acts may have courted.

In a true sense, "the evil that men do lives after them." To condone the faults of the dead is to corrupt the morality of the living.

Portrait of Admiral Schley, specially posed in 1910, when the Admiral began work upon his "Own Story" for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*



(C) HARRIS-OWING

Admiral Schley's Own Story

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ONE OF THE GREATEST SEA-FIGHTERS AMERICA HAS EVER PRODUCED

By Rear-Admiral Winfield Scott Schley

EDITOR'S NOTE.—No record in the stirring pages of our history begins to be as vital and interesting as the life-stories, self-told, of our famous fighting men, and none had a career more brimful of adventure and exciting achievement than Admiral Schley. His life story reads like a romance. It is in reality the story of nearly half a century of our hopes, ambitions, failures, successes on the high seas, told by a man who played his part gallantly and well. We heartily commend this series. It will not only interest you, but will give you a new insight into the character of one of our most illustrious fighting men.

THE perspective of my life shows an horizon seventy years away from where I am now writing these, my final recollections of the sunlight and shadow through which it has been my destiny to encounter the span we call a lifetime. That is not the actual horizon, however, for as I recall all the complex events of an active life, an inquiry comes into my mind very clearly, as to how far a man really steers his own ship of fate. How much of his journey over the seas of life has been calculated by those who have pioneered the channels before him?

I am inclined to believe that my course was made for me as early as 1660, in those fearful days of religious oppression in

France, when my grandmother's ancestor, Louis du Bois, fled from his native country and founded the Huguenot colony of New Paltz, Ulster County, New York. The first instinct of individual independence, the world over, has usually taken form in a defense of primitive faith, of the right to pray in our own hearts in our own way. It was this instinct that established the beginnings of this great Republic, and made out of this unknown wilderness a great nation. Whatever we are to-day is by the will and virtue of those pioneers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who were driven by shameless oppression of character and morals to the unknown terrors of this undiscovered country.

Though an American in heart and soul, I find myself, in the retrospect mood of the present task, under great obligation to the flesh and blood of European character. My progenitors were bountiful in their gifts of integrity, industry, courage, and religious faith to their successors. I say this because I believe the ingredients of a man's character are to be found in his ancestors, rather than in his own chemical atoms. My ancestral formula consisted chiefly of Huguenot blood, which the oppressors of that time failed to spill.

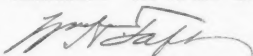
Over one hundred years before I was born, my great-grandparents emigrated from Bavaria, and settled in Frederick County, Maryland. That was in 1735. In 1760, my old progenitor, John Thomas Schley, built the first house of any pretensions in the city of Frederick. Twenty years before that, in 1740, his daughter was the first

white child born in the county. My grandmother, Mary Ferree Shriver Schley, was descended in direct line from Louis du Bois and from Madame Marie Ferree, who was obliged to flee from France to this country about 1708 or 9. Both these distinguished Huguenots were driven into exile from their native land by the unbearable proscriptions and merciless persecutions of overzealous, bigoted, and intolerant religious maniacs dur-

ing the period preceding and following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685. The flight of Madame Ferree, first to Strasbourg, then to Lindau, Germany, and ultimately to London, was directly occasioned by the infamous order of the authorities of that day to quarter the merciless Dragonades upon the Protestant families, for the purpose of extirpating that religion from the realm.

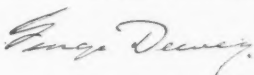
Upon her arrival in London with her family of several children, she sought and obtained an interview with William Penn, lord proprietor of Pennsylvania, who secured an audience for her with good Queen Anne, whose benevolent heart had already been so deeply moved by the stories of misfortune and merciless persecution and the sorrowful appeals of the thousands of French and German refugees who had fled to England. Sympathizing with the unfortunate plight of this splendid woman, Queen

Admiral Schley has honored me for years with his friendship. He was an able commander. He served his country faithfully and well and is entitled to its gratitude.



President.

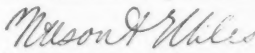
Admiral Schley was a warm-hearted, gallant, chivalrous gentleman. The country has lost a loyal servant. I have lost a dear friend of more than fifty years' standing.



Admiral of the Navy.

It would be difficult to express the high regard I have for the character and life of Admiral Schley, or to fittingly portray the important services rendered by that distinguished officer. He was one of the conspicuous men that appeared during a most important period of our history. Born and reared but a short distance from our national capital, he evidently became inspired with the true principle of our institutions, and his loyalty and devotion to the great Republic were the controlling influences in his life work.

In the war with Spain he was suddenly thrown in command of our fleet at Santiago, at a time and crisis which was to decide the naval supremacy in the Atlantic waters. There can be no disputing of the fact that he was the senior naval officer of our fleet when it met, fought, and captured or destroyed the Spanish fleet, and that his flagship, the "Brooklyn," took a most important and active part in that naval victory. Notwithstanding the efforts to detract from the credit rightly due him in that engagement, the consensus of opinion of the American people was one of approbation and commendation, and there have been few men more highly esteemed and beloved by his countrymen than this true citizen and able commander.



Lieutenant-General, U. S. A.

Anne promised her substantial assistance. William Penn afterward fulfilled the queen's promise in a grant of land of some two thousand acres in the valley of Pequea, in the province of Pennsylvania. The warrant securing her title to this land bears date of October 10, 1710.

The privations, hardships, and perils of the wilderness here, at that early period, had less terrors for her than the remorseless

My Boyhood Recollections

persecutions in her native land. Philip, the third son of Madame Ferree, who was born in 1687 and who died in 1753, married Leah du Bois, granddaughter of the founder of the Huguenot colony of New Paltz, New York. Their son, Abraham Ferree, married a Miss Eltinge, of Esopus, New York, and their daughter, Rebecca Ferree, married David Shriver, who moved to Frederick County, Maryland.

THE SCHLEY HONOR-ROLL OF PATRIOTS

The union of these two families began with the marriage of my grandfather, John Schley, to Mary Shriver, in 1792. His progenitor, John Thomas Schley, like the ancestors of his wife, had suffered piteously from the absurd distinctions of caste and class, as well as from the militarism of the Germany of that day and the religious persecutions common to that time in the provinces adjacent to France, then ruthlessly mad with the spirit of intolerance. If a mental retrospect of the history of those days be indulged in, it is not difficult to understand why exile, voluntary or otherwise, even to the wildernesses of America, was an acceptable escape from slavery of the person or the conscience.

On my mother's side, my descent is from John McClure and Mary Anne Thornburg McClure, whose progenitress was Genevieve De La Valcour, who fled to Ireland about 1687 to escape iniquitous persecution for the sake of her religion.

My father, John Thomas Schley, named for the American founder of the family in Frederick County, married Georgianna Virginia McClure, daughter of John McClure, of Baltimore.

The heritage that these men and women gave me was the actual beginning of my life work. These superb pioneers of conscience, right, honor, and courage have been the real navigators of this short cruise I have been permitted to make from a farther to a rapidly nearing shore.

The disadvantages and adversities of our forefathers of old, seemed to inspire in us a willingness to serve our country, and it is a matter of pride that we have been honorably connected with every war of the Republic, from the Revolutionary days down to the war with Spain in 1898, as the record following shows:

My great-grandfather, David Shriver, served in the war of the Revolution with the

Maryland troops as a lieutenant-colonel under General Washington. His eldest grandson was a major in the War of 1812. Two of his great-grandsons were with Major Merrick's Battalion in the war with Mexico in 1846-7 and participated in a number of the actions of that war. Four of his great-grandsons, one of whom was myself, served during the Civil War. He was represented in the Spanish War by myself as senior officer present in the battle of Santiago on July 3, 1898, when the entire fleet of the enemy was destroyed, its personnel, alive or dead, were captured, and the power of Spain driven forever from the waters of the Western Continent. In this same war he was represented by a great-great-grandson, my own boy, who was an officer in the 23d United States Infantry, present at the capture of the city of Manila.

I was born at Richfields, in the year 1839. The room in which I first saw the light was in the second story of our house to the left of the portico on the south side of the dwelling. It was the chamber of honor in the household—my mother's room.

It was undoubtedly an event of some moment to my father and mother, who lived at the time in their fine country home at Richfields, about three miles north of Frederick, Maryland, to which they had moved from Baltimore, in 1831. It was a beautiful home, situated in the valley of the Monocacy River and just west of the Tuscarora, with the Catocin Mountains some two miles farther west.

THE GREAT MEN WHO INSPIRED ME

Our house, a big, square, roomy Southern home, stood on the great highway leading to the north. All travelers northward bound, from the South, passed through Frederick. The road that led by our house was the road used by General Meade and the Army of the Potomac on their way to Gettysburg from the South in 1863. I remember as a boy, often going to the Braddock Spring near the summit of the Catocin Mountains west of Frederick, where it was said Braddock and his aids, among whom was George Washington, stopped to drink its clear waters. The fact that Braddock's army rested for some time at Frederick, and that his headquarters were in the town while he was awaiting the arrival of wagons and supplies necessary for his campaign against Fort Duquesne, and that Colonel Washing-



George Jacob Schley. Admiral Schley's great-grandfather

ton was with him and a member of his staff, gives strong probability to the legend of Braddock Spring. As it was near the summit of the mountains it was favorably located as a place to post an outpost to overlook the valley beyond, and to guard his camp against surprise from that direction.

Frederick was a place, therefore, where celebrities often passed. Many were the stories told when I was a little boy, by the older people in the town who remembered General Jackson, James K. Polk, William Henry Harrison, Henry Clay, and their contemporaries, whom they had seen pass through Frederick on their way to the capital over the great national highway from the west: some in the post stages, then the quickest conveyance, and others in their own carriages.

These were the sort of things that filled my boyish fancy with notions that when I grew up, I too would give my services to patriotic causes. In my boyish way, I had visions of unformed, nebulous enterprises,

in which I hoped to take active part some day. Everything around and about me, though peaceful and beautiful to see, was reminiscent of venture and had come about from warfare. Thus early in life, contributive elements stirred my boyish imagination to the expectations of after life.

My mother was a beautiful type of the American woman. A boy's recollection of his mother, particularly in her youth, is perhaps the supreme vision of beauty that his life impressions record. My mother had dark, lustrous brown eyes, and her Titian hair, so soft and sunny, showed distinctly her French-Irish origin. She was the most

exquisitely refined woman I have ever known, and her well-modulated voice I remember to this

day. Her devotion to her children filled her life. It was manifest in many ways of constant care for them, asleep or awake. It was my mother's

The Schley home in Frederick, Maryland, whither the family moved after the death of the future Admiral's mother



Mary Wentz Schley, wife of George Jacob Schley, and great-grandmother of the Admiral

—From an old miniature

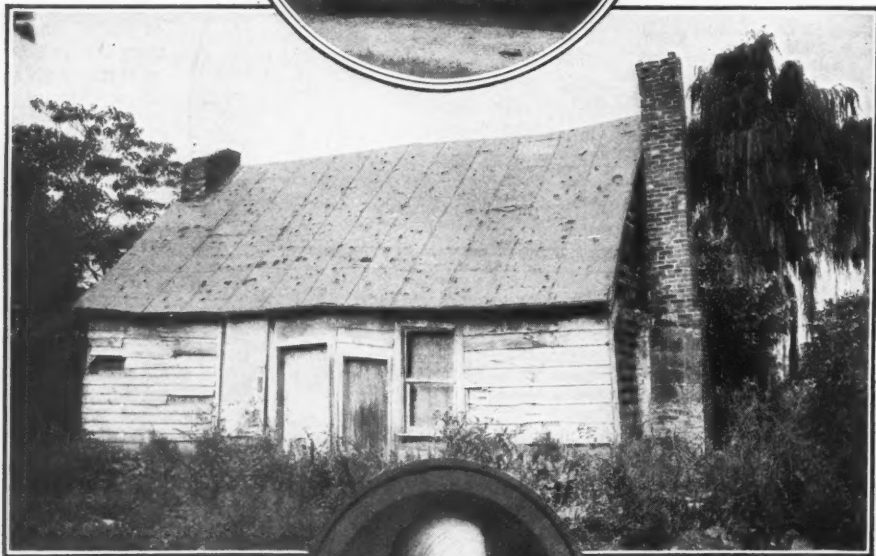
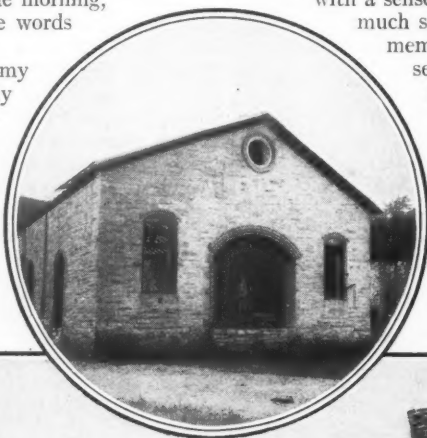
My Boyhood Recollections

influence and early care, her religious instruction, and her attention to our habits of tidiness and health, that has enabled me, perhaps, to enjoy my lease of life. She looked after us from the cradle. Particularly vivid in my mind is the little group of children arranged about their beds before retiring, or on rising in the morning, repeating after her the words of some prayer.

I was devoted to my mother, and constantly nestled near her to enjoy her fondling and her caresses. Although she was taken out of my life when I was very young, I remember to this day how keenly I suffered the sad blow of her death.

mother died when I was still a small boy. I returned to the old home only a few years ago, to see this hallowed room, to find that since the horizon of my life had widened with travel and increasing years, my boyish fancy of it had quite faded in the perspective of time. It was a comfortable room, but,

with a sense of surprise, I found it much smaller than I had remembered it to be. My sense of proportion had changed; the man no longer remembered the keen exaggerations of the boy he once was. There was no sense of disappointment, but rather the realization of the truth of Saint Paul's epistle to the Corinthians—



Boyhood recollections of Admiral (top), near Frederick, Md., built the plates of the "Monitor" house used by General Braddock he stopped at Frederick on



(By WM. HARTAIN

General Braddock

Schley—The old Catoctin furnace before the Revolution, where were rolled.—The ruins of the dock as his headquarters when his march to Fort Duquesne

Scarcely a day has passed since then that has not included some tender memory of her.

In that most sacred chamber, the room where I was born, my

"when I was a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things."

Until in my eighth or ninth year



John Thomas Schley, founder of Frederick, Md.—W. S Schley's great-grandfather



Margaret Fortnay Schley, great-grandmother of Winfield Scott Schley



Mary Schriver Schley, the Admiral's grandmother

my boyhood was passed in the absolute freedom of healthful country life, in a beautiful home. Then sorrows came into my father's life, by the death of my lovely mother and two of her children. This influenced my father to believe that the location of our home was unhealthful, so it was sold, and we moved into Frederick, where my education was continued at the primary and other schools of the city.

One of the most vivid memories of my young life, and the one that has inspired me in all the subsequent years, is of the intimate association I enjoyed with my father. In his early life he was what might be called a gentleman farmer possessed of fair means. He was educated for the law, though his inclination for it was not pronounced. He was a fluent conversationalist and had a gifted mind, which he had carefully stored with every useful knowledge. His information on history and the classics was profound. His reading was close and general, so that his mind was well stocked with information upon most subjects. I remember his admiration for the military skill of the great Napoleon. He always had on his desk a porcelain inkstand modeled in a bust of the great French Emperor. He kept up his knowledge of Latin and Greek until late in his life, and very often would help me over

rough places in Cæsar, or Vergil, or Homer, which I used to struggle to master.

He sought very early in my life to impress me with the fact that he was my friend first, last, and all the time. He constantly assured me that no matter whether

I was right or wrong, he was always my friend, that he never would decide against me if I would only give him my confidence in everything and tell him the absolute truth. His whole purpose was to gain my confidence in all things. It would be impossible to estimate the influence this confidence between father and son must have had upon my life, but it is certain that it has grown up with me in my manhood and has remained a cherished recollection throughout my life of him who has long since gone to that eternity beyond, after an honored life lived with high ideals and standards here.

The first time, and probably the only time, that I thought it necessary to withhold a confidence from my father, served as a lesson always to tell the truth in whatever predicament. I was one of several brothers, more or less up to the boy standards of school life. I was not quarrelsome, but there was always a strong sense of fair play in my nature. I recollect "scraps," almost without number, that this disposition brought about, and it was of small conse-

My Boyhood Recollections

quence to me whether the boy was large or of my own size, if I fancied he had taken unfair advantage of me or any smaller boy friend, unable to defend himself, for it was a "scrap" then to the finish. In these fights, I got the worst of them as often as I got the best of the other boy. But, the matter once settled, the clouds of anger soon passed away, and revenges never lingered over night. I remember distinctly how the old housekeeper, who was kept busy repairing rents in my clothes that came from these repeated "scraps," used to advise me to get my skin broken next time, as that would mend itself.

In every boy's recollection, there stands out one particular "scrap" which he never forgets. I had one such "scrap" in my young boyhood, in the streets of Frederick.

On this particular day I had been kept in for an hour after the school had closed. Probably I deserved the punishment. At any rate, while on my way home, after I had been released by my teacher, I fell in with two boys fighting. One of these boys was much larger than the other. I was in none too angelic a mood myself at the time, and seeing that the smaller boy was getting the worst of it, I stopped.

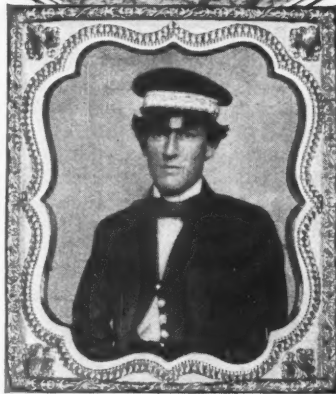
"Why don't you fight some one of your size?" I asked the larger boy. After looking me over carefully he replied,

"You're about the right size then."

That was challenge enough. My school-books were laid on the stone coping of the low wall around the court-house, and the "scrap" was on. In size and weight we were pretty evenly matched, but in activity and nimbleness the advantage was on my side. The fight soon forced us off the pavement into the middle of the street, where a blow on my adversary's jaw knocked him "down and out," in the ring parlance of to-day. In falling, the back of his head

struck on the curbing of the sidewalk, and inflicted an ugly scalp wound from which the blood flowed freely. The shock produced a slight brain concussion for a few minutes. He had to be helped to his feet by some gentlemen who had offices across the street, and who carried him to a pump just opposite, where the wound was washed, after which the boy was taken home.

The whole incident caused me great anxiety and regret as I walked home, and a night of torture, for fear that I had possibly injured the boy seriously, followed. The agony of that sleepless night with its visions far exceeded any physical pain I have since endured. It was far worse than any penalty the law might have imposed if I had been guilty of the gravest crime. Though I was sure of my father's confidence and sympathy, my grave anxiety



John Thomas Schley, father of the Admiral.—Mantel and fireplace in the Schley home at Richfields.—Admiral Schley as a midshipman in 1856



Richfields, the farmhouse near Fred-Schley was born October 9, 1839. whom the boy was named, acted

erick, Md., where Winfield Scott General Winfield Scott, for as his sponsor at his baptism

sealed my lips absolutely, and for the first time my usual custom of exchanging the day's experiences truthfully with my father was broken. I ate no supper that evening, and I rolled and tossed all night in my bed, sleepless and unhappy, and when morning at last came, the breakfast-table had no attraction for me. Suddenly, the front door-bell rang! I could have jumped from my seat in terror, for I had anticipated the situation all night.

In a moment the servant brought a large envelope in to my father, who scanned it quickly, then looking at me searchingly said: "Why, my son, what does this mean? Here is an order for your arrest."

With my eyes welling up with tears, I related what had occurred the afternoon before.

After my story had been told, my father comforted me not a little. He said to me: "I am sorry for this occurrence, but I should not respect you so much if I thought you would stand by and allow a big boy to brutally beat a small one. I will defend you."



FROM THE MERRILL COLLECTION
General Winfield Scott

Turning to the waitress he said, "Eliza, say to the constable I will bring my son to the court at ten o'clock."

At that hour all parties were present. It was one of the most dramatic incidents of my life. I shall never forget my sensations at that trial, particularly when the other boy's father drew from a satchel the blood-stained shirt the boy had worn the day before. From that day

to this I have never heard the words "Bloody shirt" mentioned, that this incident in my boyhood did not come up before me.

The magistrate, being perfectly fair-minded in the matter, found me guilty of breaking the peace and sentenced me to pay a small fine, binding me over to keep the peace for a fortnight. After the boys found out the nature of my punishment, my life for that two weeks was not a happy one. But when the embargo was removed some scores were settled.

Up to the time when I was old enough to leave the primary school and go into a higher grade, my interest seemed to be

My Boyhood Recollections

always astir for adventurous deeds. It is not so much to be wondered at, when I take into consideration the inheritance of my ancestry, like silent heralds of my destiny pointing the way in which I should go. Then, again, the air around me, the recollections and the talk of the older residents of Frederick, who were our neighbors, constantly had a bearing upon thrilling incidents in some kinsman's life.

WHERE THE "MONITOR" WAS BORN

For instance, one of the most interesting features of the vicinity of Frederick, and lying to the northwest of Richfields, was Catoctin furnace, where many of the guns and shot used against the enemy were cast during the Revolutionary War, and used on a number of public and private vessels armed in the state. This furnace has been operated for a period reaching beyond the days of the Revolution. It was there that the first castings of steamboat machinery were made about 1786 or 1787; they were tried in a steam-vessel experimented with on the Potomac just above the village of Sheperdstown, Virginia. This experiment antedated Fulton's *Clermont* and possibly aided him in developing successfully that vessel in 1807. Also at this furnace were rolled the plates used on the *Monitor*, whose fight at Hampton Roads in 1862 revolutionized naval construction all over the world. Indeed, from first to last this old Catoctin furnace, that I used to visit in my boyhood days, has been making history. The property on which the furnace still stands was an original grant of seven thousand acres about 1770, which belonged to Leonard Calvert and Thomas Johnson, who afterward became the first governor of Maryland, and who nominated George Washington to be commander-in-chief of the continental armies.

The old city of Frederick was the scene of many stirring activities during the Civil War. It was alternately occupied by both the Union and Confederate forces. The battle of Monocacy was fought within ear-shot and well within sight of the city. The battle of South Mountain, in the valley beyond the Catoctin range, was of greater magnitude and consequence, but it made less impression upon the inhabitants than that of the Monocacy, whose wounded were brought into the hospitals and city to be cared for and nursed.

One of the famous names of that great

war is that of Barbara Frietchie. I remember seeing this old woman almost daily from the time we moved to West Patrick Street. Her little one-story brick house stood next door, east of the bridge crossing Carroll Creek. Her personal appearance is very distinct in my mind to this day. She was a little old lady, very slight of figure. For her age she was very active, though somewhat severe in her appearance. Her dress was generally black, and about her neck and shoulders she wore a white kerchief. She lived quite alone in her little house with her colored cook, Nancy.

BARBARA FRIETCHIE'S GINGER-SNAPS

The old lady was very fond of children, however, and how often I went to her house with other boys for ginger-snaps or apples, which Nancy always kept on hand for us, I could not say. Barbara Frietchie in her bearing toward us children, and in fact toward any of the neighbors, was seemingly reserved and distant, but she was known to be by nature very kindly and religious. At the time I knew her she was quite an old lady and had few associates, as she had outlived most of her contemporaries, and her memories were in the past. There is a very grateful memory in my heart for old Aunt Barbara, and especially for Nancy, the cook, who, like all of her race in those times, was very kind to children. No ginger-snaps since those made by Nancy have ever tasted so good, and they were freely dispensed by old Aunt Barbara.

I have been asked a thousand times in different parts of the world whether Barbara Frietchie really lived, or was a fictitious person. I have always been able to say that I knew her personally as a very kind old lady, a God-fearing, liberty-loving, and patriotic woman. It was said by my friends and kinsmen in Frederick that the incident which Whittier used to immortalize her name had no substantial basis in fact, but her loyalty to the cause of the Union was indisputably true.

General Winfield Scott, a close friend of my father's, and in my boyhood a very distinguished figure in our country, served as my sponsor at my baptism. I was named for him, as were many other boys in that time. He promised my father at the time that if I grew up to boyhood he would use any influence he possessed to have me sent

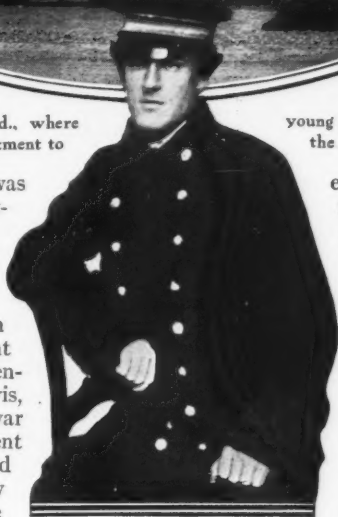


Frederick College, Frederick, Md., where
before his appointment to

young Schley received his last schooling
the Academy at Annapolis

to West Point, and until I was sixteen it was confidently expected by all my family that I would go to West Point, and ultimately become an army officer. But this dream of my ambition was ended by a disagreement which sprang up between General Scott and Jefferson Davis, who was then secretary of war in the cabinet of President Pierce. General Scott moved his headquarters to New York, and all my hopes were dashed to the winds. I gave up all plans for a military life then, and determined to see what I could do in the business world.

Instinctively I turned my face toward Baltimore, with its larger opportunities of a big city. After a week or more of diligent search I succeeded in obtaining employment in the firm of E. M. Punderson & Company, dealers in all classes of rubber goods. It was a humble occupation that started me in the business world. My pay to begin with was fifty cents a day. I reported for duty at seven o'clock in the morning, made the fires, swept out the offices, and did odd jobs all day until seven at night. Consid-



Midshipman W. S. Schley, from
an ambrotype made in 1859

ering, however, that I had nothing to offer my employers but a willingness to do, faithfully, loyally, and honestly, what I was told, my wages were all that might be expected.

With three dollars and fifty cents a week in a city as big as Baltimore seemed to be then, there was little chance to do anything but dream my evenings and my Sundays away, in private problems and secret expectations of the future. My evenings were spent in reading

Captain Marryat's popular new stories of the sea. How keenly I sympathized with the adventures of "Midshipman Easy," and how fascinating seemed the mistakes of "Peter Simple" during his early experiences in the service of the navy! These and other books of Captain Marryat's entranced me, and gradually filled my imagination with an almost unconquerable desire for a sea life. But so far as there seemed to be any practical plan to carry out these desires, I could see none. So I just kept on sweeping out the office and indulging in anticipations—that came true. I am now

quite sure they always intended to come true.

There was no possible influence at that time to help me but the strongest kind of a desire to be a sailor. Of course I thought about some practical way by which I could begin my ventures, but how was it to be brought about? That was the stumbling-block.

The solution came like a sudden answer to my wishes from a clear sky. In the district where my father lived there was a deadlock in the political convention of that year, 1855, to nominate the candidate for Congress. This was before the Republican party had appeared in Maryland, during the disintegration of the old Whig party, and the temporary ascendancy of the Know-Nothing party. It resulted, however, after a number of ballots, in the choice of the Honorable Henry W. Hoffman, a young lawyer of Cumberland. My father and family were strong friends of the Hoffmans, and during the campaign worked most zealously and indefatigably for his election, which was effected in no small degree through the sympathy of the old Whigs, who found a temporary resting-place with the Know-Nothing party until the Republican party sprang into prominence in Maryland and gave them a more satisfying affiliation. It was this balance of power which elected Mr. Hoffman by a very large majority.

MY APPOINTMENT TO ANNAPOLIS

After his election he ran over to Frederick to dine with my father, to whom he felt grateful. It was during this dinner that he expressed to my father his desire to appoint one of his sons to West Point or Annapolis. There was then no vacancy at West Point from our district, but there was one at Annapolis. Here was my chance. In another year I should have been past the age-limit for admission. I readily accepted the appointment to Annapolis tendered me. With undisguised pleasure I went to my employers and told them of my intentions. They were complimentary enough to express regret at losing me from their service, but the senior member of the firm kindly stated that he felt sure I would succeed in whatever calling I should adopt. I put aside the broom, and thanking my employers for their kindness to me, I returned to Frederick at once to begin preparations for my admission to the Naval Academy. These examinations I knew were quite

severe, so I went to work during the summer of 1856 to prepare for the ordeal.

I ENTER MY COUNTRY'S SERVICE

My greatest anxiety was a knowledge that if I failed to pass my examination it would mortify my family beyond expression, and the hope to avoid this was a tower of strength to me at the time. When the time did come finally and the ordeal of uncertainties in both the mental and physical examinations had been met successfully, it would be difficult to picture in words the feeling of joy that filled my soul. I hastened back to the old city hotel in Annapolis, where my father was waiting for me, to tell him the good news. It was a moment of great pride and satisfaction to him also. I distinctly remember that he said to me then:

"I always had high hopes of your success, my boy. Keep in mind always the determination to succeed in your graduation, and it will fill me with satisfaction."

I was directed by the superintendent to report for duty the following day at ten o'clock. This was the beginning of my first realization in my life's cruise. As my new associations in this new career began, I was made aware that they were to separate me from my home and all that was particularly dear to me just then. Often, since then, I have experienced the same repetitions of farewells to those I love. We sailors, who so often find ourselves afloat upon the great high seas entirely alienated from those we care most for on land, somehow or other cling closer to our homes than do the more fortunate men who never leave them.

There was no delay in fitting us to the new life. The day following my assignment to the Academy, we were taken in hand to be set up, straightened up, and seasoned to endurance. This was so effectively done that I doubt if any mother or father visiting the school six months afterward would have recognized their offspring.

In the class of '58, which I just returned from "leave" the year I entered the Academy, was George Dewey, who served with success and distinction during the Civil War, and lived to win garlands of merited acclaim and served with honor in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898. We were two years together at the Naval Academy, and the friendship begun there has survived all the years we have since served together under the flag we loved and both sought to honor.

The next instalment of "*Admiral Schley's Own Story*" will appear in the January issue.

Smoke Bellew

Hanging by your toes on the sheer face of a mountain of ice, waiting to slip into space, probably isn't exactly the kind of half-hour's exercise most of you would pick out—if you had your choice. Tying a man around your waist and then wondering when the avalanche is going to cut loose, doesn't help much. But it makes corking good reading—especially in the way Jack London tells it. And that's the main thing. This story, of course, centers about "Smoke." It is a tale of one of the strange adventures and tests of nerve that come as part of the day's work in the wild gold scramble of the Yukon country

By Jack London

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

The Little Man

"I WISHT you wasn't so set in your ways," Shorty demurred. "I'm sure scairt of that glacier. No man ought to tackle it by his lonely."

Smoke laughed cheerfully, and ran his eye up the glistening face of the tiny glacier that filled the head of the valley. "Here it is August already, and the days have been getting shorter for two months," he epitomized the situation. "You know quartz, and I don't. But I can bring up the grub, while you keep after that mother lode. So long. I'll be back by to-morrow evening."

He turned and started.

"I got a hunch something's goin' to happen," Shorty pleaded after him.

But Smoke's reply was a bantering laugh. He held on down the little valley, occasionally wiping the sweat from his forehead, the while his feet crushed through ripe mountain raspberries and delicate ferns that grew beside patches of sun-sheltered ice.

In the early spring he and Shorty had come up the Stewart River and launched out into the amazing chaos of the region where Surprise Lake lay. And all of the spring and half of the summer had been consumed in futile wanderings, when, on the verge of turning back, they caught their first glimpse of the baffling, gold-bottomed sheet of water which had lured and fooled a generation of miners. Making their camp in the old cabin which Smoke had discovered on his previous visit, they had learned three things: first, heavy nugget gold was carpeted thickly on the lake bottom; next, the gold could be dived for in the shallower portions,

but the temperature of the water was man killing; and, finally, the draining of the lake was too stupendous a task for two men in the shorter half of a short summer. Underterred, reasoning from the coarseness of the gold that it had not traveled far, they had set out in search of the mother lode. They had crossed the big glacier that frowned on the southern rim and devoted themselves to the puzzling maze of small valleys and canyons beyond, which, by most unmountain-like methods, drained, or had at one time drained, into the lake.

The valley Smoke was descending gradually widened after the fashion of any normal valley; but, at the lower end, it pinched narrowly between high precipitous walls and abruptly stopped in a cross wall. At the base of this, in a welter of broken rock, the streamlet disappeared, evidently finding its way out underground. Climbing the cross wall, from the top Smoke saw the lake beneath him. Unlike any mountain lake he had ever seen, it was not blue. Instead, its intense peacock-green tokened its shallowness. It was this shallowness that made its draining feasible. All about arose jumbled mountains, with ice-scarred peaks and crags, grotesquely shaped and grouped. All was topsyturvy and unsystematic—a Doré nightmare. So fantastic and impossible was it that it affected Smoke as more like a cosmic landscape joke than a rational portion of earth's surface. There were many glaciers in the canyons, most of them tiny, and, as he looked, one of the larger ones, on the north shore, caved amid thunders and

splashings. Across the lake, seemingly not more than half a mile, but, as he well knew, five miles away, he could see the bunch of spruce-trees and the cabin. He looked again to make sure, and saw smoke clearly rising from the chimney. Somebody else had surprised themselves into finding Surprise Lake, was his conclusion, as he turned to climb the southern wall.

From the top of this he came down into a little valley, flower-floored and lazy with the hum of bees, that behaved quite as a reasonable valley should, in so far as it made legitimate entry on the lake. What was wrong with it was its length—scarcely a hundred yards; its head a straight up-and-down cliff of a thousand feet, over which a stream pitched itself in descending veils of mist.

And here he encountered more smoke, floating lazily upward in the warm sunshine beyond an out-jut of rock. As he came around the corner he heard a light, metallic tap-tapping and a merry whistling that kept the beat. Then he saw the man, an up-turned shoe between his knees, into the sole of which he was driving hob-spikes.

"Hello!" was the stranger's greeting, and Smoke's heart went out to the man in ready liking. "Just in time for a snack. There's coffee in the pot, a couple of cold flapjacks, and some jerky."

"I'll go you if I lose," was Smoke's acceptance, as he sat down. "I've been rather skimped on the last several meals, but there's oodles of grub over in the cabin."

"Across the lake? That's what I was heading for."

"Seems Surprise Lake is becoming populous," Smoke complained, emptying the coffee-pot.

"Go on, you're joking, aren't you?" the man said, surprise painted on his face.

Smoke laughed. "That's the way it takes everybody. You see those high ledges across there to the northwest? There's where I first saw it. No warning. Just suddenly caught the view of the whole lake from there. I'd given up looking for it, too."

"Same here," the other agreed. "I'd headed back and was expecting to fetch the Stewart last night, when out I popped in sight of the lake. If that's it, where's the Stewart? And where have I been all the time? And how did you come here? And what's your name?"

"Bellew. Kit Bellew."

"Oh! I know you." The man's eyes and face were bright with a joyous smile, and his hand flashed eagerly out to Smoke's. "I've heard all about you."

"Been reading police-court news, I see," Smoke sparred modestly.

"Nope." The man laughed and shook his head. "Merely recent Klondike history. I might have recognized you if you'd been shaved. I watched you putting it all over the gambling crowd when you were bucking roulette in the Elkhorn. My name's Carson—Andy Carson; and I can't begin to tell you how glad I am to meet up with you."

He was a slender man, wiry with health, with quick black eyes and a magnetism of camaraderie.

"And this is Surprise Lake?" he murmured incredulously.

"It certainly is."

"And its bottom's buttered with gold?"

"Sure. There's some of the churning." Smoke dipped in his overalls pocket and brought forth half a dozen nuggets. "That's the stuff. All you have to do is go down to bottom, blind, if you want to, and pick up a handful. Then you've got to run half a mile to get up your circulation."

"Well, gosh-dash my dingbats, if you haven't beaten me to it," Carson swore whimsically, but his disappointment was patent. "An' I thought I'd scooped the whole caboodle. Anyway, I've had the fun of getting here."

"Fun!" Smoke cried. "Why, if we can ever get our hands on all that bottom, we'll make Rockefeller look like thirty cents."

"But it's yours," was Carson's objection.

"Nothing to it, my friend. You've got to realize that no gold deposit like it has been discovered in all the history of mining. It will take you and me and my partner and all the friends we've got to lay our hands on it. All Bonanza and Eldorado, dumped together, wouldn't be richer than half an acre down there. The problem is to drain the lake. It will take millions. And there's only one thing I'm afraid of. There's so much of it that if we fail to control the output it will bring about the demonetization of gold."

"And you tell me—" Carson broke off, speechless and amazed.

"And glad to have you. It will take a year or two, with all the money we can

raise, to drain the lake. It can be done. I've looked over the ground. But it will take every man in the country that's willing to work for wages. We'll need an army, and we need right now decent men in on the ground floor. Are you in?"

"Am I in? Don't I look it? I feel so much like a millionaire that I'm real timid about crossing that big glacier. Couldn't afford to break my neck now. Wish I had some more of those hob-spikes. I was just hammering the last in when you came along. How's yours? Let's see."

Smoke held up his foot.

"Worn smooth as a skating-rink!" Carson cried. "You've certainly been hiking some. Wait a minute, and I'll pull some of mine out for you."

But Smoke refused to listen. "Besides," he said, "I've got about forty feet of rope cached where we take the ice. My partner and I used it coming over. It will be a cinch."

II

It was a hard, hot climb. The sun blazed dazzlingly on the ice-surface, and with streaming pores they panted from the exertion. There were places, criss-crossed by countless fissures and crevasses, where an hour of dangerous toil advanced them no more than a hundred yards. At two in the afternoon, beside a pool of water bedded in the ice, Smoke called a halt.

"Let's tackle some of that jerky," he said. "I've been on short allowance, and my knees are shaking. Besides, we're across the worst. Three hundred yards will fetch us to the rocks, and it's easy going, except for a couple of nasty fissures and one bad one that heads us down toward the bulge. There's a weak ice-bridge there, but Shorty and I managed it."

Over the jerky, the two men got acquainted, and Andy Carson unbosomed himself of the story of his life. "I just knew I'd find Surprise Lake," he mumbled in the midst of mouth-

fuls. "I had to. I missed the French Hill Benches, the Big Skookum, and Monte Cristo, and then it was Surprise Lake or bust. And here I am. My wife knew I'd strike it. I've got faith enough, but hers knocks mine galleywest. She's a corker, a crackerjack—dead game, grit to her finger-ends, never-say-die, a fighter from the drop of the hat, the one woman for me, true blue and all the rest. Take a look at that."

He sprung open his watch, and on the inside cover Smoke saw the small, pasted photograph of a bright-haired woman, framed on either side by the laughing face of a child.

"Boys!" he queried.

"Boy and girl," Carson answered proudly. "He's a year and a half older." He sighed. "They might have been some grown, but we had to wait. You see, she was sick. Lungs. But she put up a fight. What'd we know about such stuff? I was clerking, railroad



"Hello!" was the stranger's greeting, and Smoke's heart went out to the man in ready liking. "Just in time for a snack. There's coffee in the pot, a couple of cold flapjacks, and some jerky."

clerk, Chicago, when we got married. Her folks were tuberculosis. Doctors didn't know much in those days. They said it was hereditary. All her family had it. Caught it from each other, only they never guessed it. Thought they were born with it. Fate. She and I lived with them the first couple of years. I wasn't afraid. No tuberculosis in my family. And I got it. That set me thinking. It was contagious. I caught it from breathing their air.

"We talked it over, she and I. Then I jumped the family doctor and consulted an up-to-date expert. He told me what I'd figured out for myself, and said Arizona was the place for us. We pulled up stakes and went down—no money, nothing. I got a job sheep-herding, and left her in town—a lung town. It was filled to spilling with lungers.

"Of course, living and sleeping in the clean open, I started right in to mend. I was away months at a time. Every time I came back, she was worse. She just couldn't pick up. But we were learning. I jerked her out of that town, and she went to sheep-herding with me. In four years, winter and summer, cold and heat, rain, snow, and frost, and all the rest, we never slept under a roof, and we were moving camp all the time. You ought to have seen the change—brown as berries, lean as Indians, tough as rawhide. When we figured we were cured, we pulled out for San Francisco. But we were too previous. By the second month we both had slight hemorrhages. We flew the coop back to Arizona and the sheep. Two years more of it. That fixed us. Perfect cure. All her family's dead. Wouldn't listen to us.

"Then we jumped cities for keeps. Knocked around on the Pacific coast, and southern Oregon looked good to us. We settled in the Rogue River Valley—apples. There's a big future there, only nobody knows it. I got my land—on time, of course—for forty an acre. Ten years from now it'll be worth five hundred.

"We've done some almighty hustling. Takes money, and we hadn't a cent to start with, you know—had to build a house and barn, get horses and plows, and all the rest. She taught school two years. Then the boy came. But we've got it. You ought to see those trees we planted—a hundred acres of them, almost mature now. But it's all been outgo, and the mortgage working overtime. That's why I'm here. She'd 'a' come along

only for the kids and the trees. She's handlin' that end, and here I am, a gosh-danged expensive millionaire—in prospect."

He looked happily across the sun-dazzle on the ice to the green water of the lake along the farther shore, took a final look at the photograph, and murmured:

"She's some woman, that. She's hung on. She just wouldn't die, though she was pretty close to skin and bone all wrapped around a bit of fire when she went out with the sheep. Oh, she's thin now. Never will be fat. But it's the prettiest thinness I ever saw, and when I get back, and the trees begin to bear, and the kids get going to school, she and I are going to do Paris. I don't think much of that burg, but she's just hankered for it all her life."

"Well, here's the gold that will take you to Paris," Smoke assured him. "All we've got to do is to get our hands on it."

Carson nodded with glistening eyes. "Say—that farm of ours is the prettiest piece of orchard land on all the Pacific coast. Good climate, too. Our lungs will never get touched again there. Ex-lungers have to be almighty careful, you know. If you're thinking of settling, well, just take a peep in at our valley before you settle, that's all. And fishing! Say!—did you ever get a thir y-five-pound salmon on a six-ounce rod? Some fight, bo', some fight!"

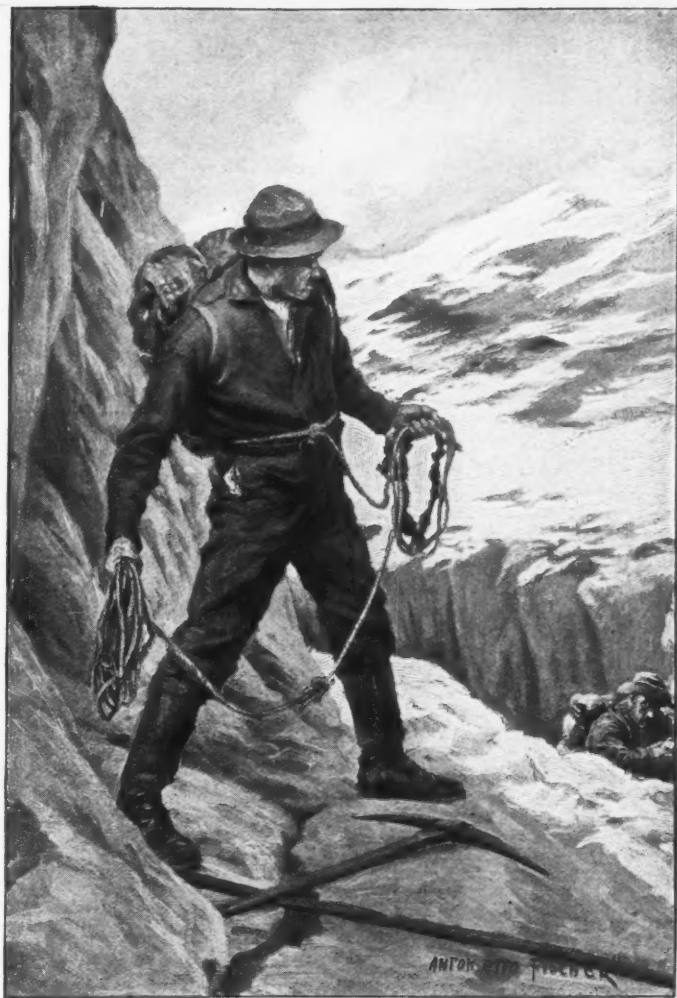
III

"I'm lighter than you by forty pounds," Carson said. "Let me go first."

They stood on the edge of the crevasse. It was enormous and ancient, fully a hundred feet across, with sloping, age-eaten sides instead of sharp-angled rims. At this one place it was bridged by a huge mass of pressure-hardened snow that was itself half ice. Even the bottom of this mass they could not see, much less the bottom of the crevasse. Crumbling and melting, the bridge threatened imminent collapse. There were signs where recent portions had broken away, and even as they studied it a mass of half a ton dislodged and fell.

"Looks pretty bad," Carson admitted with an ominous head-shake. "And it looks much worse than if I wasn't a millionaire."

"But we've got to tackle it," Smoke said. "We're almost across. We can't go back. We can't camp here on the ice all night."



Carson, perched on his ledge, his feet braced against the melting surface, swiftly recoiled the rope from his shoulders to his hand. "Wait!" he cried.

"Don't move, or the whole shooting-match will come down"

And there's no other way. Shorty and I explored for a mile up. It was in better shape, though, when we crossed."

"It's one at a time, and me first." Carson took the part coil of rope from Smoke's hand. "You'll have to cast off. I'll take the rope and the pick. Gimme your hand so I can slip down easy."

Slowly and carefully he lowered himself the several feet to the bridge, where he stood, making final adjustments for the perilous traverse. On his back was his pack outfit. Around his neck, resting on his

shoulders, he coiled the rope, one end of which was still fast to his waist.

"I'd give a mighty good part of my millions right now for a bridge-construction gang," he said, but his cheery, whimsical smile belied the words. Also, he added, "It's all right; I'm a cat."

The pick, and the long stick he used as an alpenstock, he balanced horizontally after the manner of a rope-walker. He thrust one foot forward tentatively, drew it back, and steeled himself with a visible physical effort.



DRAWN BY ANTON OTTO FISCHER

"Now! Ready? Hoist away!" called Smoke. He sent up the two packs on the first trip, was consequently rebuked by Joy Gastell, and on the second trip came up himself

"I wish I was flat broke," he smiled up. "If ever I get out of being a millionaire this time, I'll never be one again. It's too uncomfortable."

"It's all right," Smoke encouraged. "I've been over it before. Better let me try it first."

"And you forty pounds to the worse," the little man flashed back. "I'll be all right in a minute. I'm all right now." And this time the nerving-up process was instantaneous. "Well, here goes for Rogue River and the apples," he said, as his foot went out, this time to rest carefully and lightly while the other foot was brought up and past. Very gently and circumspectly he continued on his way until two-thirds of the distance was covered. Here he stopped to examine a depression he must cross, at the bottom of which was a fresh crack. Smoke, watching, saw him glance to the side and down into the crevasse itself, and then begin a slight swaying.

"Keep your eyes up!" Smoke commanded sharply. "Now! Go on!"

The little man obeyed, nor faltered on the rest of the journey. The sun-eroded slope of the farther edge of the crevasse was slippery, but not steep, and he worked his way up to a narrow ledge, faced about, and sat down.

"Your turn," he called across. "But just keep a-coming and don't look down. That's what got my goat. Just keep a-coming, that's all. And get a move on. It's almighty rotten."

Balancing his own stick horizontally, Smoke essayed the passage. That the bridge was on its last legs was patent. He felt a jar under foot, a slight movement of the mass, and a heavier jar. This was followed by a single sharp crackle. Behind him he knew something was happening. If for no other reason, he knew it by the strained, tense face of Carson. From beneath, thin and faint, came the murmur of running water, and Smoke's eyes involuntarily wavered to a glimpse of the shimmering depths. He jerked them back to the way before him. Two-thirds over, he came to the depression. The sharp edges of the crack, but slightly touched by the sun, showed how recent it was. His foot was lifted to make the step across, when the crack began slowly widening, at the same time emitting numerous sharp snaps. He made the step quickly, increasing the stride

of it, but the worn nails of his shoe skated on the farther slope of the depression. He fell on his face, and without pause slipped down and into the crack, his legs hanging clear, his chest supported by the stick which he had managed to twist crosswise as he fell.

His first sensation was the nausea caused by the sickening up-leap of his pulse; his first idea was of surprise that he had fallen no farther. Behind him was crackling and jar and movement to which the stick vibrated. From beneath, in the heart of the glacier, came the soft and hollow thunder of the dislodged masses striking bottom. And still the bridge, broken from its farthest support and ruptured in the middle, held, though the portion he had crossed tilted downward at a pitch of twenty degrees. He could see Carson, perched on his ledge, his feet braced against the melting surface, swiftly recoiling the rope from his shoulders to his hand.

"Wait!" he cried. "Don't move, or the whole shooting-match will come down."

He calculated the distance with a quick glance, took the bandanna from his neck and tied it to the rope, and increased the length by a second bandanna from his pocket. The rope, manufactured from sled-lashings and short lengths of plaited rawhide knotted together, was both light and strong. The first cast was lucky as well as deft, and Smoke's fingers clutched it. He evidenced a hand-over-hand intention of crawling out of the crack. But Carson, who had refastened the rope around his own waist, stopped him.

"Make it fast around yourself as well," he ordered.

"If I go I'll take you with me," Smoke objected.

The little man became very peremptory.

"You shut up," he ordered. "The sound of your voice is enough to start the whole thing going."

"If I ever start going—" Smoke began.

"Shut up! You ain't going to ever start going. Now do what I say. That's right—under the shoulders. Make it fast. Now! Start! Get a move on, but easy as you go. I'll take in the slack. You just keep a-coming. That's it. Easy. Easy."

Smoke was still a dozen feet away when the final collapse of the bridge began. Without noise, but in a jerky way, it crumbled an increasing tilt.

"Quick!" Carson called, coiling in hand-over-hand on the slack of the rope which Smoke's rush gave him.



The digging toe of Smoke's farther-extended foot encountered vacancy, and he knew that it was over the straight-away fall

When the crash came, Smoke's fingers were clawing into the hard face of the wall of the crevasse, while his body dragged back with the falling bridge. Carson, sitting up, feet wide apart and braced, was heaving on the rope. This effort swung Smoke in to the side wall, but it jerked Carson out of his niche. Like a cat, he faced about, clawing wildly for a hold on the ice and slipping down. Beneath him, with forty feet of

taut rope between them, Smoke was clawing just as wildly; and ere the thunder from below announced the arrival of the bridge, both men had come to rest. Carson had achieved this first, and the several pounds of pull he was able to put on the rope had helped bring Smoke to a stop.

Each lay in a shallow niche, but Smoke's was so shallow that, tense with the strain of flattening and sticking, nevertheless he would have slid on had it not been for the slight assistance he took from the rope. He was on the verge of a bulge and could not see beneath him. Several minutes passed, in which they took stock of the situation and made rapid strides in learning the art of sticking to wet and slippery ice. The little man was the first to speak.

"Gee!" he said; and, a minute later, "If you can dig in for a moment and slack on the rope, I can turn over. Try it."

Smoke made the effort, then rested on the rope again. "I can do it," he said. "Tell me when you're ready. And be quick."

"About three feet down is holding for my heels," Carson said. "It won't take a moment. Are you ready?"

"Go on."

It was hard work to slide down a yard, turn over and sit up; but it was even harder for Smoke to remain flattened and maintain a position that from instant to instant made a greater call upon his muscles. As it was, he could feel the almost perceptible beginning of the slip when the rope tightened and he looked up into his companion's face. Smoke noted the yellow pallor of sun-tan forsaken by the blood, and wondered what his own complexion was like. But when he saw Carson, with shaking fingers, fumble for his sheath-knife, he decided the end had come. The man was in a funk and was going to cut the rope.

"Don't m-mind m-m-me," the little man chattered. "I ain't scared. It's only my nerves, gosh-dang them. I'll b-b-be all right in a minute."

And Smoke watched him, doubled over, his shoulders between his knees, shivering

and awkward, holding a slight tension on the rope with one hand while with the other he hacked and gouged holes for his heels in the ice.

"Carson," he breathed up to him, "you're some bear, some bear."

The answering grin was ghastly and pathetic. "I never could stand height," Carson confessed. "It always did get me. Do you mind if I stop a minute and clear my head? Then I'll make those heel-holds deeper so I can heave you up."

Smoke's heart warmed. "Look here, Carson. The thing for you to do is to cut the rope. You can never get me up, and there's no use both of us being lost. You can make it out with your knife."

"You shut up!" was the hurt retort. "Who's running this?"

And Smoke could not help but see that anger was a good restorative for the other's nerves. As for himself, it was the more nerve-racking strain, lying plastered against the ice with nothing to do but strive to stick on.

A groan and a quick cry of "Hold on!" warned him. With face pressed against the ice, he made a supreme sticking effort, felt the rope slacken, and knew Carson was slipping toward him. He did not dare look up until he felt the rope tighten and knew the other had again come to rest.

"Gee, that was a near go," Carson chattered. "I came down over a yard. Now you wait. I've got to dig new holds. If this danged ice wasn't so melty we'd be hunky-dory."

Holding the few pounds of strain necessary for Smoke with his left hand, the little man jabbed and chopped at the ice with his right. Ten minutes of this passed.

"Now, I'll tell you what I've done," Carson called down. "I've made heel-holds and hand-holes for you alongside of me. I'm going to heave the rope in slow and easy, and you just come along sticking an' not too fast. I'll tell you what, first of all. I'll take you on the rope and you worry out of that pack. Get me?"

Smoke nodded, and with infinite care unbuckled his pack-straps. With a wriggle of the shoulders he dislodged the pack, and Carson saw it slide over the bulge and out of sight.

"Now, I'm going to ditch mine," he called down. "You just take it easy and wait."

Five minutes later the upward struggle began. Smoke, after drying his hands on

the insides of his arm-sleeves, clawed into the climb—bellied, and clung, and stuck, and plastered—sustained and helped by the pull of the rope. Alone, he could not have advanced. Despite his muscles, because of his forty pounds' handicap, he could not cling as did Carson. A third of the way up, where the pitch was steeper and the ice less eroded, he felt the strain on the rope decreasing. He moved slower and slower. Here was no place to stop and remain. His most desperate effort could not prevent the stop, and he could feel the down-slip beginning.

"I'm going," he called up.

"So am I," was the reply, gritted through Carson's teeth.

"Then cast loose."

Smoke felt the rope tauten in a futile effort, then the pace quickened, and as he went past his previous lodgment and over the bulge the last glimpse he caught of Carson he was turned over, with madly moving hands and feet striving to overcome the downward draw. To Smoke's surprise, as he went over the bulge, there was no sheer fall. The rope restrained him as he slid down a steeper pitch, which quickly eased until he came to a halt in another niche on the verge of another bulge. Carson was now out of sight, ensconced in the place previously occupied by Smoke.

"Gee!" he could hear Carson shiver. "Gee!"

An interval of quiet followed, and then Smoke could feel the rope agitated.

"What are you doing?" he called up.

"Making more hand- and foot-holds," came the trembling answer. "You just wait. I'll have you up here in a jiffy. Don't mind the way I talk. I'm just excited. But I'm all right. You wait and see."

"You're holding me by main strength," Smoke argued. "Soon or late, with the ice melting, you'll slip down after me. The thing for you to do is to cut loose. Hear me! There's no use both of us going. Get that? You're the biggest little man in creation, but you've done your best. You cut loose."

"You shut up. I'm going to make holes this time deep enough to haul up a span of horses."

"You've held me up long enough," Smoke urged. "Let me go."

"How many times have I held you up?" came the truculent query.

"Some several, and all of them too many. You've been coming down all the time."

"And I've been learning the game all the time. I'm going on holding you up until we get out of here. Savvy? When God made me a light-weight I guess he knew what he was about. Now, shut up. I'm busy."

Several silent minutes passed. Smoke could hear the metallic strike and hack of the knife, and occasional dribblets of ice slid over the bulge and came down to him. Thirsty, clinging on hand and foot, he caught the fragments in his mouth and melted them to water, which he swallowed.

He heard a gasp that slid into a groan of despair, and felt a slackening of the rope that made him claw. Immediately the rope tightened again. Straining his eyes in an upward look along the steep slope, he stared a moment, then saw the knife, point first, slide over the verge of the bulge and down upon him. He tucked his cheek to it, shrank from the pang of cut flesh, tucked more tightly, and felt the knife come to rest.

"I'm a slob," came the wail down the crevasse.

"Cheer up, I've got it," Smoke answered.

"Say! Wait! I've a lot of string in my pocket. I'll drop it down to you, and you send the knife up."

Smoke made no reply. He was battling with a sudden rush of thought.

"Hey! You! Here comes the string. Tell me when you've got it."

A small pocket-knife, weighted on the end of the string, slid down the ice. Smoke got it, opened the larger blade by a quick effort of his teeth and one hand, and made sure that the blade was sharp. Then he tied the sheath-knife to the end of the string.

"Haul away!" he called.

With strained eyes he saw the upward progress of the knife. But he saw more—a little man, afraid and indomitable, who shivered and chattered, whose head swam with giddiness, and who mastered his qualms and distresses and played a hero's part. Not since his meeting with Shorty had Smoke so quickly liked a man. Here was a proper meat-eater, eager with friendliness, generous to destruction, with a grit that shaking fear could not shake. Then, too, he considered the situation cold-bloodedly. There was no chance for two. Steadily, they were sliding into the heart of the glacier, and it was his greater weight that was dragging the little man down. The little man could stick like a fly. Alone, he could save himself.

"Polly for us!" came the voice from

above, down and across the bulge of ice. "Now we'll get out of here in two shakes."

The awful struggle for good cheer and hope in Carson's voice, decided Smoke.

"Listen to me," he said steadily, vainly striving to shake the vision of Joy Gastell's face from his brain. "I sent that knife up for you to get out with. Get that? I'm going to chop loose with the jack-knife. It's one or both of us. Get that?"

"Two or nothing," came the grim but shaky response. "If you'll hold on a minute—"

"I've held on for too long now. I'm not married. I have no adorable thin woman nor kids nor apple-trees waiting for me. Get me? Now, you hike up and out of that!"

"Wait! For God's sake, wait!" Carson screamed down. "You can't do that! Give me a chance to get you out. Be calm, old horse. We'll make the turn. You'll see. I'm going to dig holds that'll lift a house and barn."

Smoke made no reply. Slowly and gently, fascinated by the sight, he cut with the knife until one of the three strands popped and parted.

"What are you doing?" Carson cried desperately. "If you cut, I'll never forgive you—never. I tell you it's two or nothing. We're going to get out. Wait! For God's sake!"

And Smoke, staring at the parted strand, five inches before his eyes, knew fear in all its weakness. He did not want to die; he recoiled from the shimmering abyss beneath him, and his panic brain urged all the preposterous optimism of delay. It was fear that prompted him to compromise.

"All right," he called up. "I'll wait. Do your best. But I tell you, Carson, if we both start slipping again I'm going to cut."

"Huh! Forget it. When we start, old horse, we start up. I'm a porous plaster. I could stick here if it was twice as steep. I'm getting a sizable hole for one heel already. Now, you hush, and let me work."

The slow minutes passed. Smoke centered his soul on the dull hurt of a hang-nail on one of his fingers. He should have clipped it away that morning—it was hurting then—he decided; and he resolved, once clear of the crevasse, that it should immediately be clipped. Then, with short focus, he stared at the hang-nail and the finger with a new comprehension. In a minute, or a few minutes at best, that hang-nail, that

finger, cunningly jointed and efficient, might be part of a mangled carcass at the bottom of the crevasse. Conscious of his fear, he hated himself. Bear-eaters were made of sterner stuff. In the anger of self-revolt he all but hacked at the rope with his knife. But fear made him draw back the hand and to stick himself again, trembling and sweating, to the slippery slope. To the fact that he was soaking wet by contact with the thawing ice he tried to attribute the cause of his shivering; but he knew, in the heart of him, that it was untrue.

A gasp and a groan and an abrupt slackening of the rope, warned him. He began to slip. The movement was very slow. The rope tightened loyally, but he continued to slip. Carson could not hold him, and was slipping with him. The digging toe of his farther-extended foot encountered vacancy, and he knew that it was over the straight-away fall. And he knew, too, that in another moment his falling body would jerk Carson's after it.

Blindly, desperately, all the vitality and life-love of him beaten down in a flashing instant by a shuddering perception of right and wrong, he brought the knife-edge across the rope, saw the strands part, felt himself slide more rapidly, and then fall.

What happened then, he did not know. He was not unconscious, but it happened too quickly, and it was unexpected. Instead of falling to his death, his feet almost immediately struck in water, and he sat violently down in water that splashed coolingly on his face. His first impression was that the crevasse was shallower than he had imagined and that he had safely fetched bottom. But of this he was quickly disabused. The opposite wall was a dozen feet away. He lay in a basin formed in an out-jut of the ice-wall by melting water that dribbled and trickled over the bulge above and fell sheer down a distance of a dozen feet. This had hollowed out the basin. Where he sat the water was two feet deep, and it was flush with the rim. He peered over the rim and looked down the narrow chasm hundreds of feet to the torrent that foamed along the bottom.

"Oh, why did you?" he heard a wail from above.

"Listen," he called up. "I'm perfectly safe, sitting in a pool of water up to my neck. And here's both our packs. I'm going to sit on them. There's room for a half-dozen here. If you slip, stick close and

you'll land. In the meantime you hike up and get out. Go to the cabin. Somebody's there. I saw the smoke. Get a rope, or anything that will make rope, and come back and fish for me."

"Honest!" came Carson's incredulous voice.

"Cross my heart and hope to die. Now, get a hustle on, or I'll catch my death of cold."

Smoke kept himself warm by kicking a channel through the rim with the heel of his shoe. By the time he had drained off the last of the water, a call from Carson announced that he had reached the top.

After that Smoke occupied himself with drying his clothes. The late afternoon sun beat warmly in upon him, and he wrung out his garments and spread them about him. His match-case was water-proof, and he manipulated and dried sufficient tobacco and rice-paper to make cigarettes.

Two hours later, perched naked on the two packs and smoking, he heard a voice above that he could not fail to identify.

"Oh, Smoke! Smoke!"

"Hello, Joy Gastell!" he called back. "Where'd you drop from?"

"Are you hurt?"

"Not even any skin off!"

"Father's paying the rope down now. Do you see it?"

"Yes, and I've got it," he answered. "Now, wait a couple of minutes, please."

"What's the matter?" came her anxious query, after several minutes. "Oh, I know, you're hurt."

"No, I'm not. I'm dressing."

"Dressing?"

"Yes. I've been in swimming. Now! Ready? Hoist away!"

He sent up the two packs on the first trip, was consequently rebuked by Joy Gastell, and on the second trip came up himself.

Joy Gastell looked at him with glowing eyes, while her father and Carson were busy coiling the rope. "How could you cut loose in that splendid way?" she cried. "It was—it was glorious, that's all."

Smoke waved the compliment away with a deprecatory hand.

"I know all about it," she persisted. "Carson told me. You sacrificed yourself to save him."

"Nothing of the sort," Smoke lied. "I could see that swimming-pool right under me all the time."

The next Smoke Bellew story, "*The Hanging of Cultus George*," will appear in the January issue.



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

They seated themselves, laughing; then suddenly Edgerton remembered; and he went away with a hasty jump up and found half a dozen old-time

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A STORY OF LOVE AND A WOMAN'S WAY WITH A MAN

IN FORMA PAUPERIS

THE failure of the old-time firm of Edgerton, Tennant & Co. was unusual only because it was an honest one—the bewildered creditors receiving a hundred cents on a dollar from property not legally involved.

Edgerton had been dead for several years; the failure of the firm presently killed old Tennant, who was not only old in years, but also old in fashion—so obsolete, in fact, were the fashions he clung to that he had used his last cent in a matter which he regarded as involving his personal honor.

The ethically laudable but materially



excuse, only to return again with a brace of decanters. "My uncle's port and sherry," he said. Silvette glasses; and the luncheon continued

By Robert W. Chambers

Author of "The Common Law," etc.

Illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson

ruinous integrity of old Henry Tennant had made matters rather awkward for his orphaned nieces. Similar traditions in the Edgerton family—of which there now remained only a single representative, James Edgerton 3d—devastated that young man's inheritance so completely that he came back to the United States, *via* Boston, on a cattle-

steamer, and arrived in New York the following day with two dollars in loose silver and a confused determination to see the affair through without borrowing.

He walked from the station to the nearest of his clubs: it was very early, and the few club servants on duty gazed at him with friendly and respectful sympathy.

In the visitors' room he sat down, wrote out his resignation, drew up similar valedictories to seven other expensive and fashionable clubs, and then picked up his two suit-cases again, declining with a smile the offered assistance from Read, the door-man who had been in service there as long as the club had existed.

"Mr. Edgerton," murmured the old man, "Mr. Inwood is in the Long Room, sir."

Edgerton thought a moment, then walked to the doorway of the Long Room and looked in. At the same time Inwood glanced up from his newspaper.

"Hello!" he exclaimed; "is that you, Edgerton?"

"Who the devil do you think it is?" replied Edgerton amiably.

They shook hands. Inwood said,

"What's the trouble—a grouch, a hang-over, or a lady?"

Edgerton laughed, placed his suit-cases on the floor, and seated himself in a corner of the club window for the first time in six months—and for the last time in many, many months to come.

"It's hot in town," he observed. "How are you, Billy?"

"Blooming. Accept from me a long, cold one with a permanent fizz to it. Yes? No? A Riding Club cocktail, then? What? Nix for the rose-wreathed bowl?"

Edgerton shook his head. "Nix for the bowl, thanks."

"Well, you won't mind if I ring for first-aid materials, will you?"

The other politely waved his gloved hand.

A servant arrived and departed with the emergency order; Inwood pushed an unpleasant and polychromatic mess of Sunday newspapers aside and reseated himself in the leather chair.

"I'm terribly sorry about what happened to you, Jim," he said. "So is everybody. We all thought it was to be another gay year of that dear Paris for you."

"I thought so, too," nodded Edgerton; "but what a fellow thinks hasn't anything to do with anything. I've found out that."

Inwood emptied his glass and gazed at the frost on it sentimentally. "The main thing," he said, "is for your friends to stand by you."

"No; the main thing is for them to stand aside—kindly, Billy—while I pass down and out for a while."

"My dear fellow—"

"While I pass *out*," repeated Edgerton. "I may return; but that will be up to me—and not up to them."

"Well, what good is friendship?"

"Good to believe in—no good otherwise. Let it alone, and it's the finest thing in the world; use it, and you will have to find another name for it." He smiled at Inwood. "Friendship must remain always the happiest and most comforting of all theories," he said. "Let it alone; it has a value inestimable in its own place—no value otherwise."

Inwood began to laugh. "Your notion concerning friends and friendship isn't the popular one."

"But my friends will sleep the sounder for knowing what are my views concerning friendship."

"That's cynical and unfair," began the other, reddening.

"No, it's honest; and you notice that even my honesty puts a certain strain on our friendship," retorted Edgerton, still laughing.

"You're only partly in earnest, aren't you?"

"Oh, I'm never really in earnest about anything. That's why fate extended an unerring and iron hand, grasped me by the slack of my pants, shook me until all my pockets turned inside out, and set me down hard on the trolley tracks of destiny. Just now I'm crawling for the sidewalk and the skirts of chance."

He laughed again without the slightest bitterness, and looked out the window.

The view from the club window was soothing; Fifth Avenue lay silent and deserted in the sunshine of an early summer morning.

Inwood said, "The papers—everybody—spoke most glowingly of the way your firm settled with its creditors."

"Oh, the devil! Why should ordinary honesty make such a stir in New York? Don't let's talk about it; I'm going home, anyway."

"Where?"

"To my place."

"It's been locked up for over a year, hasn't it?"

"Yes, but there's a janitor."

"Come down to Oyster Bay with me," urged Inwood; "come on, Jim, and forget your troubles over Sunday."

"As for my troubles," returned the other, rising with a shrug and pulling on his gloves, "I've had leisure on the ocean to classify and pigeonhole the lot of them. I know

exactly what I'm going to do, and I'm going home to begin it."

"Begin what?" inquired Inwood with a curiosity entirely friendly.

"I'm going to find out," said Edgerton, "whether any of what my friends have called my 'talents' are real enough to get me a job worth three meals a day, or whether they'll merely procure for me the hook."

"What are you thinking of trying?"

"I don't know exactly; I thought of turning some one of my parlor tricks into a future profession—if people will let me."

"Writing stories?"

"Well, that, or painting, or illustrating—music, perhaps. Perhaps I could write a play, or act in some other fellow's; or do some fool thing or other," he ended vaguely. And for the first time Inwood saw that his friend's eyes were weary, and that his face seemed unusually worn. It was plain enough that James Edgerton 3d had already journeyed many a league with Black Care, and that he had not yet outridden that shadowy horseman.

"Jim," said Inwood seriously, "why won't you let me help you?" But Edgerton checked him in a perfectly friendly manner.

"You *are* helping me," he said; "that's why I'm going about my business. Success to yours, Billy. Good-by! I'll be back"—glancing around the familiar room—"some-time or other; back here and around town, everywhere, as usual," he added confidently; and the haunted look faded. He smiled and nodded with a slight gesture of adieu, picked up his suit-cases, and, with another friendly shake of his head for the offers of servants' assistance, walked out into the sunshine of Fifth Avenue, and west toward his own abode in Fifty-sixth Street.

When he arrived there he was hot and dusty, and he decided to let Kenna carry up his luggage. So he descended to the area.

Every time he pulled the basement bell he could hear it jingle inside the house somewhere, but nobody responded, and after a while he remounted the area steps to the street and glanced up at the brownstone façade. Every window was shut, every curtain drawn. That block of Fifty-sixth Street on a Sunday morning in early summer is an unusually silent and deserted region. Edgerton looked up and down the sunny street. After Paris the city of his birth seemed very mean and treeless and shabby in the merciless American sunshine.

Fumbling for his keys, he wondered to what meaner and shabbier street he might soon be destined, now that fortune had tripped him up; and how soon he would begin to regret the luxury of this dusty block and the comforts of the house which he was now about to enter. And he fitted his latch-key to the front door and let himself in.

It was a very clumsy and old-fashioned apartment-house, stupidly built, five stories high; there was only one apartment to a floor, and no elevator. The dark and stuffy austerity of this out-of-date building depressed him anew as he entered. Its tenants, of course, were away from town for the summer—respectable, middle-aged people—stodgy, wealthy, dull as the carved banisters that guarded the dark, gas-lit well of the staircase. Each family owned its own apartment—had been owners for years. Edgerton inherited his from an uncle—an amateur of antiquities and the possessor of many very extraordinary things, including his own private character and disposition.

Carrying his suit-cases, which were pasted all over with tricolored labels, the young man climbed the first two flights of stairs, and then, placing his luggage on the landing, halted to recover his breath and spirits.

The outlook for his future loomed as dark as the stair well; he sat down on the top step, lighted a cigarette, and gazed up at the sham stained glass in the skylight above. And now for the first time he began to realize something of the hideousness of his present position, his helplessness, unfitted as he was to cope with financial adversity or make an honest living at anything.

If people had only let him alone when he first emerged from college as mentally naked as anything newly fledged, his more sensible instincts probably would have led him to remain in the ancient firm of his forefathers, Edgerton, Tennant & Co., dealers in iron. But fate and his friends had done the business for him; finally persuading him to go abroad. He happened, unfortunately, to possess a light, graceful, but not at all unusual, talent for several of the arts; he could tinkle catchy improvisations on a piano, sketch in oil and water-colors, model in clay, and write the sort of amateur verse popular in college periodicals. Women often evinced an inclination to paw him and tell him their troubles; fool friends spoke vaguely of genius and "achieving something distinctly worth while"—which finally spoiled a per-

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Suddenly the figure turned its head and saw him, and stood motionless against the flare of light—a young girl, very slim in her shimmering vestments of blossom-sprayed silk

fectly good business man, especially after a third-rate periodical had printed one of his drawings, and a fourth-rate one had published a short story by him.

So he had been ass enough to take a vacation and offer himself two years' study abroad; and he had been away almost a year when the firm went to the wall, carrying with it everything he owned on earth except this apartment and its entailed contents, which he could neither cast into the melting-pot for his creditors nor even sell for his own benefit. However, the creditors were paid dollar for dollar, and those finer and entirely obsolete points of the Edgerton honor remained silver bright; and the last of the Edgertons was back once more in New York with his apartment, his carvings, tapestries, and pictures, which the will forbade him to sell, and two dollars change in his pockets.

Presently he cast his cigarette from him, picked up his suit-cases and started upward, jaw set. It was a good thing for him that he had a jaw like that. It was his only asset now. So far in life, however, he had never used it.

Except the echo of his tread on the uncarpeted staircase, not another sound stirred in the house. Every landing was deserted, every apartment appeared to be empty and locked up for the summer. Dust lay gray on banister and landing; the heated atmosphere reeked with the odor of moth-balls and tar paper seeping from locked doors.

On the top floor a gas-jet flickered as usual in the corridor which led to his apartment. By its uncertain flame he selected a key from the bunch he carried, and let himself into his own rooms; and the instant he set foot across the threshold he knew that something was wrong. Whether it had been a slight sound which he fancied he heard in the private passageway, or whether he imagined some stealthy movement in the golden dusk beyond, he could not determine; but a swift instinct halted and challenged him, and left him listening.

As he stood there, checked, slowly the idea began to possess him that there was somebody else

in the apartment. When the slight but sudden chill had left him, and his hair no longer tingled on the verge of rising, he moved forward a step, then again halted. For a moment, still grasping both suit-cases, he stood as though at bay, listening, glancing from alcove to corridor, from one dim spot of light to another where a door ajar here and there revealed corners of empty rooms.

Whether or not there was at that moment another living being except himself in the place he did not know, but he did know that otherwise matters were not as he had left them a year ago in his apartment. For one thing, here, under his feet, was spread his beautiful, antique Daghestan runner, soft as deep velvet, which he had left carefully rolled up, sewed securely in burlap, and stuffed full of camphor balls. For another thing, his ear had caught a low, rhythmical sound from the mantel in his bedroom. It was his frivolous Sèvres clock ticking as indiscreetly as it had ever ticked in the boudoir of its gaily patched and powdered mistress a hundred and fifty years ago—which was disturbing to Edgerton, as he had been away for a year, and had left his apartment locked up with orders to Kenna, the janitor, to keep out until otherwise instructed by letter or cable.

Listening, eyes searching the dusk, he heard somewhere the rustle of a curtain blowing at an open window; and, stepping softly to his dining-room door, he turned the knob cautiously and peered in. No window seemed to be open there; the place was dark, the furniture still in its linen coverings.

As he moved silently to the butler's pantry, where through loosely closed blinds the sunshine glimmered, making an amber-tinted mystery of the silence, it seemed for a moment to him as though he could still hear somewhere the stir of the curtain; and he turned and retraced his steps through the library.

In the twilight of the place, half revealed as he passed, he began now to catch glimpses of a state of things that puzzled him.

Coming presently to his dressing-room, he opened the door, and, sure enough, there was a window open, and beside it a curtain fluttered gaily. But what completely monopolized his attention was a number of fashionable trunks—wardrobe-trunks, steamer-trunks, hat-trunks, shoe-trunks—

some open, and the expensive-looking contents partly visible; some closed and covered. And on every piece of this undoubtedly feminine luggage were either the letters D. T. or S. T.

And on top of the largest trunk sat a live cat.

II

CORPUS DELICTI

THE cat was pure white and plummy, and Persian. Out of its wonderful sky-blue eyes it looked serenely at Edgerton; and the young man gazed back, astonished. Then, suddenly, he caught a glimpse of the bedroom beyond, and froze to a statue. The object that appeared to petrify him lay flung across his bed—a trailing garment of cobweb lace touched here and there with rose-tinted ribbons.

For a moment he stared at it hypnotized; then his eyes shifted wildly to his dresser, which seemed to be covered with somebody else's toilet silver and crystal, and—*what* was that row of cunning little commercial curls!—that chair heaped with fluffy stuffs, lacy, intimate things, faintly fragrant!

With a violent shiver he turned his startled eyes toward the parted tapestry gently stirring in the unfelt summer wind. From where he stood he could see into the great studio beyond. A small, flowered-silk slipper lay near the threshold, high of heel, impertinent, fascinating; beyond, on the corner of a table, stood a bowl full of peonies, ivory, pink, and salmon-tinted; and their perfume filled the place.

Somebody had rolled up the studio shades. Sunshine turned the great square window to a sheet of dazzling glory, and against it, picked out in delicate silhouette, a magic shadow was moving—a dainty, unreal shape, exquisite as a tinted phantom stealing through a fairy tale of Old Japan. Suddenly the figure turned its head and saw him, and stood motionless against the flare of light—a young girl, very slim in her shimmering vestments of blossom-sprayed silk.

The next moment he walked straight into the studio.

Neither spoke. She examined him out of wide and prettily shaped eyes; he inspected her with amazed intentness. Everything about her seemed so unreal, so subtly fragrant—the pink peonies like fluffy powder-

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puffs above each little close-set ear, the rose-tinted silhouette of her, the flushed cheeks, soft bare arms, the silk-sheathed feet shod in tiny straw sandals tied with vermilion cords.

"Who are you?" she asked; and her voice seemed to him as charmingly unreal as the rest of the Japanese fairy tale that held him enthralled. "Will you please go out again at once!" she said, and he woke up partly.

"This—this is perfectly incredible," he said slowly.

"It is, indeed," she said, placing a snowy finger upon an electric button and retaining it there.

He regarded her without comprehension, muttering, "I—I simply cannot realize it—that cat—those g-garments—you—"

"There is another thing you don't realize," she said with heightened color: "that I am steadily ringing the janitor's bell—and the janitor is large and violent and Irish, and he is probably half-way up-stairs by this time."

"Do you take me for a malefactor?" he asked, astounded.

"I am not afraid of you in the least," she retorted, still keeping her finger on the bell.

"Afraid of *me*? Of course you are not."

"I am *not*! Although your two suit-cases are probably packed with the silver from my dressing-stand."

"What!"

"Then—then—what have you put into your suit-cases? *What* are you doing in this apartment? And will you please leave your suit-cases and escape immediately!"

Her voice betrayed a little unsteadiness now, and Edgerton said, "Please don't be frightened if I seem to remain—"

"You are remaining!"

"Of course I am." He forced an embarrassed smile. "I've got to; I haven't any other place to go. There are all sorts of complications here, and I think you'd better listen to me and stop ringing. The janitor is out anyway."

"He is *not*!" she retorted, now really frightened; "I can hear him coming up the stairway—probably with a p-pistol."

Edgerton turned red. "When I next set eyes on that janitor," he said, "I'll probably knock his head off. *Don't* be frightened! I only meant it humorously. Really, you must listen to me, because you and I have

some rather important matters to settle within the next few minutes."

In his growing perplexity and earnestness he placed his suit-cases on the rug and advanced a step toward her, and she shrank away, her hands flat against the wall behind her, the beautiful, frightened eyes fixed on his—and he halted.

"I haven't the slightest notion who you are," he said, bewildered; "but I'm pretty sure that I'm James Edgerton, and that this is my apartment. But how you happen to be inhabiting it I can't guess, unless that rascally janitor sublet it to you supposing that I'd be away for another year and never know it."

"*You* James Edgerton?" she exclaimed.

"My steamer docked yesterday."

"*You* are James Edgerton, of Edgerton, Tennant & Co.?"

He began to laugh. "I *was* James Edgerton, of Edgerton, Tennant & Co.; I am now only a silent partner in Fate, Destiny & Co. If you don't mind—if you please—who are *you*?"

"Why, I'm Diana Tennant!"

"*Who*?"

"Diana Tennant! Haven't you ever heard of my sister and me?"

"You mean you're those two San Francisco nieces?" he asked, astonished.

"I'm one of them. Silvette is sitting on the roof."

"On—the roof!"

"Yes; we have a roof garden—some geraniums and things, and a hammock. It's just a makeshift until we secure employment. Is it possible that you are really James Edgerton? And didn't you know that we had rented your apartment by the month?"

He passed an uncertain hand over his eyes. "Will you let me sit down a moment and talk to you?" he said.

"Please—of course. I *do* beg your pardon, Mr. Edgerton. You must understand that it was to look up and see a friend of mine who was sitting there with two suit-cases."

He began to laugh; and after a moment she ventured to smile in an uncertain, bewildered way, and seated herself in a big velvet chair against the light.

They sat looking at each other, lost in thought: he evidently absorbed in the problem before him; she, unquiet, waiting, the reflex of unhappy little perplexities setting her sensitive lips aquiver at moments.

"You did rent this apartment from the janitor?" he said at length.

"My sister and I—yes. Didn't he have your permission?"

"No. But don't worry. I'll fix it up somehow; we'll arrange—"

"It is perfectly horrid!" she exclaimed. "What in the world can you think of us? But we were quite innocent—it was merely chance. Isn't it strange, Mr. Edgerton! Silvette and I had walked and walked and walked, looking for some furnished apartment within our means which we might take by the month; and in Fifty-sixth Street we saw the sign, 'Apartment and Studio To Let for the Summer,' and we inquired, and he let us have it for almost nothing. And we never even knew that it belonged to *you*!"

"To whom did you draw your checks for the rent?"

"We were to pay the janitor."

"Have you done so?" he asked sharply.

"N-no. We arranged—not to pay—until we could afford it."

"I'm glad of that! Don't you pay that scoundrel one penny. As for me, of course I couldn't think of accepting—"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" she said in pretty despair; "I've got to tell you everything now! Several humiliating things—circumstances—very tragic, Mr. Edgerton."

"No; you need not tell me a single thing that is likely to distress you."

"But I've got to! You don't understand. That wretched janitor has put us in a position from which there is absolutely no escape. Because I—we ought to go away instantly—b-but we—can't!"

"Not at all, Miss Tennant. I ought to leave you in possession, and I—I'm trying to think out how to—to do it."

"How can we ask you to do such a—"

"You don't ask; I've got to find some means—ways—expedients—"

"But we *can't* turn you out of your own place!"

"No; but I've got to turn myself out. If you'll just let me think—"

"I will—oh, I will, Mr. Edgerton; but please, *please* let me explain the dreadful and humiliating conditions first, so that you won't consider me absolutely shameless."

"I don't!"

"You will, unless I tell you—unless I find courage to tell you how it is with my sister and me."

"I'd like to know, but you must not feel obliged to tell me."

"I do feel obliged! *I must!* We're poor. We've spent all our money, and we *can't* go anywhere else very well!"

Edgerton glanced at the luxury in the next room, astonished; then his gaze reverted to the silk-clad figure before him.

"You don't understand, of course," she said, flushing. "How could you suppose us to be almost penniless living here in such a beautiful place with all those new trunks and gowns and pretty things! But *that* is exactly why we are doing it!"

She leaned forward in her chair, the tint of excitement in her cheeks.

"After the failure, Silvette and I hadn't anything very much!—*you* know how everything of uncle's went." She stopped abruptly. "Why—why, probably everything of yours went, too! Did it?"

He laughed. "Pretty nearly everything."

"Oh! oh!" she cried; "what a perfectly atrocious complication! Perhaps—perhaps you haven't money enough to—to go somewhere else for a while. Have you?"

"Well, I'll fix it somehow."

"Mr. Edgerton," she said excitedly, "Silvette and I have *got* to go!"

"No," he said, laughing, "you've only got to go on with your story, Miss Tennant. I am a very interested and sympathetic listener."

"Yes," she said desperately, "I must go on with that, too. Listen, Mr. Edgerton; we thought a long while and discussed *everything*, and we concluded to stake everything on an idea that came to Silvette. So we drew out all the money we had, and we paid all our just debts, and we parted with our chaperone—who was a perfect d-darling—I'll tell you about her sometime—and we took Argent, our cat, and came straight to New York, and we hunted and hunted for an apartment until we found this! And then—*you* know what we did?" she demanded eagerly.

"I couldn't guess!" said Edgerton, smiling.

"We bought clothes—beautiful clothes! And everything luxurious that we didn't have we bought—almost frightened to death while we were doing it—and *then* we advertised!"

"Advertised!"

"From *here*! Can you *ever* forgive us?"

"Of course," he said, mystified; "but what did you advertise?"



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

"Two ladies of gentle birth and breeding, cultivated, efficient at auction bridge, desire employment in helping camps, bungalows, or shooting-boxes. For terms write to or call at Apartment address in full follows," she said. "Can



to entertain house-parties, week-ends, or unwelcome but financially important relatives at country houses. Five—" She lowered the paper and turned her flushed face toward him. "Your you ever bring yourself to forgive us?"

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"Ourselves!" she said, smiling exquisitely. "What!"

"Certainly; and we've had replies, but we haven't liked the people so far. Indeed, we advertised in the most respectable daily, weekly, and monthly papers." She sprang to her feet, trotted over to the sofa, picked up an illustrated periodical devoted to country life, and searching hastily through the advertising pages, found and read aloud to him, still standing there, the following advertisement:

"Two ladies of gentle birth and breeding, cultivated, linguists, musicians, thoroughly conversant with contemporary events, efficient at auction bridge, competent to arrange dinners and superintend decorations, desire employment in helping to entertain house-parties, week-ends, or unwelcome but financially important relatives and other visitations, at country houses, camps, bungalows, or shooting-boxes. For terms write to or call at Apartment Five—"

She turned her flushed face toward him. "Your address in full follows," she said. "Can you ever bring yourself to forgive us?"

His astonished gaze met hers. "That doesn't worry me," he said.

"It is generous and—splendid of you to say so," she faltered. "You understand now, don't you? We *had* to spend all our money on clothes; and we thought ourselves so fortunate in this beautiful apartment because it was certain to impress people, and nobody could possibly suspect us of poverty with that great picture by Goya over the mantel and priceless tapestries and rugs and porcelains in every direction—and our cat to make it look as though we really belonged here—" Her voice trembled a moment on the verge of breaking, and her eyes grew brilliant as freshly washed stars, but she lifted her resolute little head and caught the tremulous lower lip in her teeth. Then, the crisis over, she dropped the illustrated paper, came slowly back to her chair and sank down, extending her arms along the velvet upholstery in silence.

Between them, on the floor, a sapphire rug stretched its ancient Persian folds. He looked at it gravely, thinking how its hue matched her eyes. Then he considered more important matters, plunging blindly into profound abstraction; and found nothing in the depths except that he had no money to go anywhere, but that he must go nevertheless. He looked up after a moment.

"Would you and your sister think it inhospitable of me if I asked when you—I mean—if I—"

"I know what you mean, Mr. Edgerton. Silvette and I are going at once."

"You can't. Do you think I'd permit it? Please remember, too, that you've advertised from here, and you've simply got to remain here. All I meant to ask was whether you think it might be for a week or two yet, but, of course, you can't tell—and forgive me for asking—but I was merely trying to adjust several matters in my mind to conditions—"

"Mr. Edgerton, we cannot remain. There is not in my mind the slightest doubt concerning your financial condition. If you *could* let us stay until we secured employment, I'd ask it of you—because you are James Edgerton; but you can't"—she rose with decision—"and I'm going up to the roof to tell Silvette."

"If you stir I'll take those suit-cases and depart for good."

"You are very generous—the Edgertons always were, I have heard, but we cannot accept—"

He interrupted, smiling, "I think the Tennants never needed instruction concerning the finer points of obligation." He stood a moment thoughtfully, turning over and over the two dollars in his pocket; then with a laugh he picked up his suit-cases.

"Don't do that!" she said in a grave voice.

"There is nothing else to do."

"There's another bedroom."

They stood, not regarding each other, considering there in the sunshine.

"Will you wait until I return?" she asked, looking up. "I want to talk to Silvette. I'd like to have Silvette see you. Will you wait? Because I've come to one of my quick conclusions—I'm celebrated for them, Mr. Edgerton. Will you wait?"

"Yes," he said, smiling.

So she trotted away in her little straw sandals and flowery vestments and butterfly sash; and he began to pace the studio, hands clasped behind him, trying to think out matters and ways and means—trying to see a way clear which offered an exit from this complication without forcing him to do that one thing of which he had a steadfast horror—borrow money from a friend.

Mingled, too, with his worried cogitations was the thought of Henry Tennant's nieces—these young California girls of whom he had vaguely heard without any particular interest. New-Yorkers are never interested in relatives they never saw; seldom in any

relatives at all. And, long ago, there had been a marriage between Tennant and Edgerton—in colonial days, if he remembered correctly; and, to his own slight surprise, he felt it now as an added obligation. It was not enough that he efface himself until they found employment; more than that was due them from an Edgerton. And, as he had nothing to do it with, he wondered how he was to do anything at all for these distant cousins.

Standing there in the sunshine he cast an ironical glance around him at the Beauvais tapestries, the old masters, the carved furniture of Charles II's time, rugs dyed with the ancient splendor of the East, made during the great epoch when carpets of Ispahan, Damascus—and those matchless hues woven with gold and silver which are called Polish—decorated the palaces of emperor and sultan.

Not one thing could he sell under the will of Peter Edgerton to save his body from starvation or his soul from anything else; and he jingled the two dollars in his pocket, and thought of his talents, and wondered what market there might be for any of them in a city where brick-layers were paid higher wages than school-teachers, and where the wealthy employed others to furnish their new and gorgeous houses with everything from pictures and books to the ancient plate from which they ate. And, thinking of these things, his ears caught a slight rustle of silk; and he lifted his head as Diana Tennant and her sister Silvette came toward him through the farther room.

III

SUB JUDICE

"ISN'T this a mess!" said Silvette in a clear, unembarrassed voice, giving him her hand. "Imagine my excitement up on the roof, Mr. Edgerton, when Diana appeared and told me what a perfectly delightful man had come to evict us!"

"I didn't say it that way," observed Diana, her ears as pink as the powder-puff peonies above them. "My sister," she explained, "is one of those girls whose apparent frankness is usually nonsense. I'm merely warning you, Mr. Edgerton."

Silvette—a tall, free-limbed, healthy, and plumper edition of her sister—laughed. "In the first place," she said, "suppose we

have luncheon. There is a fruit salad which I prepared after breakfast. Our maid is out, but we know how to do such things, having been made to when schoolgirls."

"You'll stay, won't you?" asked Diana.

"Poor Mr. Edgerton—where else is he to go?" said Silvette calmly. "Diana, if you'll set places for three at that very beautiful and expensive antique table, I'll bring some agreeable things from the refrigerator."

"Could I be of any use?" inquired Edgerton, smiling.

"Indeed, you can be. Talk to Diana and explain to her how respectable we are and you are, and how everything is certain to be properly arranged to everybody's satisfaction. Diana has a very wonderful idea, and she's come to one of her celebrated snapshot conclusions—a conclusion, Mr. Edgerton, most flattering to you. Ask her." And she went away toward the kitchenette not at all embarrassed by her pretty morning attire nor by the thick braid of golden hair which hung to her girdle.

Diana cast a swift glance at Edgerton, and, seeing him smile, smiled too, and set about laying places for three with snowy linen, crystal, silver, and the lovely old Spode porcelain which had not its match in all the city.

"It's like a play or a novel," she said; "the hazard of our coming here the way we did, and of your coming back to America; but, of course, the same cause operated in both cases, so perhaps it isn't so remarkable after all! And"—she repressed a laugh—"to think that I should mistake you for a malefactor! Did it seem to you that I behaved in a silly manner?"

"On the contrary, you exhibited great dignity and courage and self-restraint."

"Do you really mean it? I was nearly scared blue, and I was perfectly certain you'd stuffed your suit-cases full of our toilet silver. *Wasn't* it funny, Mr. Edgerton! And *what* did you think when you looked into your studio and saw a woman?"

"I was—somewhat prepared."

"Of course—after a glimpse into our bedroom! But that must have astonished you, didn't it?"

"Slightly. The first thing I saw was a white cat staring at me from the top of a trunk."

She laughed, arranging the covers with deft touch. "And what next did you see?"

"Garments," he explained briefly.

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"Oh! Yes, of course."

"Also a silk-flowered slipper with a very high heel on the threshold."

"Mine," she said. "You see, in the days of our affluence, I used to have a maid. I forget, and throw things about sometimes."

"You've a maid now, haven't you?"

"Oh, just a combination cook and waitress until we can find employment. She's horribly expensive, too, but it can't be helped, because it would create an unfavorable impression if Silvie or I answered the door-bell."

"You're quite right," he said; "people have a curious aversion to employing those who really need it. Prosperity never lacks employment. It's odd, isn't it?"

"It's rather cruel," she said under her breath.

Silvette came in, bringing a chilled fruit salad, bread and butter, cold chicken, and tea. "We'll have to put it all on at once. You don't mind, do you, Mr. Edgerton?"

He said smilingly but distinctly: "One's own family can do no wrong. That is my creed."

Diana looked up at him. "I wondered whether you knew we were relations," she said, flushing deliciously.

"You see," added Silvette, "it was not for us to remind you."

"Of our kinship? Why not?"

"Because you might have considered it an added obligation toward us," said Diana, blushing.

"I do—a delightful one; and it is very gracious of you to acknowledge it."

"But we don't mean to presume on it," interrupted Silvette hastily. "Some day we really do mean to regulate our financial obligations toward you."

"There are no such obligations. Please remember what roof covers you."

"Mr. Edgerton!"

"And whose salt—"

"It's our salt, anyway," said Diana; "I bought it myself!"

They seated themselves, laughing; then suddenly Edgerton remembered, and he went away with a hasty excuse, only to return again with a brace of decanters.

"My uncle's port and sherry," he said.

Silvette jumped up and found half a dozen old-time glasses; and the luncheon continued.

"Isn't it ridiculous!" observed the young fellow, glancing around the studio; "here

am I surrounded by a fortune in idiotic antiquities, lunching from a table that the Metropolitan Museum inherits after my death, sipping a sherry which came from the cellars of a British monarch—with two dollars and several cents in my pockets, and not the slightest idea where to get more. Isn't it funny!"

Silvette forced a smile, then glanced significantly at her sister. Diana said gravely:

"We have several hundred dollars. Would you be kind enough to let us offer you what you require for immediate use until—"

"Why, you blessed child!" he said, laughing, "that isn't what worries me now!"

"Then, what is it?" inquired Silvette.

"You, and your sister."

"What do you mean, Mr. Edgerton?"

"I mean that I'm worried over your prospects!"

"Why, they are perfectly bright!" exclaimed Diana. "In a few days somebody will employ us to help entertain a number of stupid and wealthy people. We'll make a great deal of money, I expect; don't you, Silvie?"

"Certainly; but I'm wondering what Mr. Edgerton is going to do with two dollars in his pocket and us in his apartment."

"So am I," said Diana.

"It's perfectly charming of you to care."

"What an odd thing to say to us! Is it not very natural to care? Besides your being related, you have also been so considerate and so nice to us that we'd care anyway, I think. Don't you, Silvie?"

Silvette nodded her golden-crowned head. "The thing to do for the present," she said, "is for you to take that further room. It was Diana's idea, and I entirely agree with her—after seeing you."

"That was the sudden conclusion of which I spoke to you," explained Diana. "Such things come to me instinctively. I thought to myself, 'If he mentions the kinship between us, then we'll ask him to remain.' And you did. And we do ask you; don't we, Silvie?"

"Certainly. If two old maids wish to entertain their masculine cousin for a week or two, whose affair is it? Let Mrs. Grundy shriek; I don't care. Do you, Diane?"

"No, I don't. Besides," she added naively, "she's out of town."

They all laughed. The germ of a delightful understanding was beginning to take

shape; it had already become nascent and was developing in every frank smile, every candid glance, every unembarrassed question and reply.

"We have no parents," said Diana gravely. "You have none, have you?"

"No," he said.

"Then it seems natural to me, our being here together; but"—and Diana glanced sideways at him—"in the East, I believe, people consider relationship of little or no importance."

He sipped his sherry, reflecting. "As a rule," he said; "but"—and he laughed—"if any Easterner even suspected he had two such California cousins, he'd start for the Pacific coast without his breakfast!"

"Did you ever hear anything half as amiable?" asked Silvette, laughing.

"Ineverdid," replied Diana, "especially as we're probably his twenty-second cousins."

"That distance may lend an enchantment to the obligations of kinship!" he said gaily.

Diana looked up, grave as a youthful Japanese goddess. "You don't mean that, do you?"

"No, I don't," he said, reddening. "If I did, the janitor ought to throw me out."

Silvette nodded seriously. "We know you said it in joke; but the only straw to float Diane's idea is our kinship, Mr. Edgerton. And we grasped at it—for your sake."

"Please cling to it for your own sakes, too," he said, also very serious now; "it may become a plank to float us all. I realize the point you are straining out of kindness to me. If I accept shelter here for a day or two, I shall know very well what it costs you to offer it."

"It doesn't cost us anything," interrupted Diana hastily. "Silvette meant only that you should understand why our consciences and common sense sanction your remaining if we remain."

"You must remain anyway!" he said.

"So must you, cousin," said Silvette, laughing. "Anyway, you've probably sent your trunks here—haven't you?"

"By jinks! I forgot that!" he exclaimed. "I believe that racket on the stairs means that my trunks are arriving!"

It did mean exactly that. And when Edgerton went out to the landing he encountered two expressmen staggering under the luggage, and, behind them, the terrified janitor, who had returned, and who, on the advent of the baggage, had hurried up-

stairs to evict summarily the illegal lodgers before Edgerton's arrival.

Now, at sight of Edgerton himself, the Irishman turned white with horror and clung to the banisters for support; but Edgerton only said pleasantly: "Hello, Mike! I hope you've made my cousins comfortable. I'll be here for a day or two. Bring up any mail there may be for me, and see that the landing is properly dusted after this." He came back to the studio intensely amused. "I thought that guilty Irishman would faint on the stairs when he saw me," he said. "I merely said that I hoped he'd looked out for my cousins' comfort. You know," he added laughingly, "I'm anything except angry at him."

Silvette rose from the table and strolled over toward him. "Are you really glad to know us?" she asked curiously. "We've heard that New-Yorkers are not celebrated for their enthusiasm over poor relatives from the outer darkness."

"New-Yorkers," he said, "are not different from any other creatures segregated in a self-imposed and comfortable captivity. People who have too much of anything are spoiled to that extent—ignorant to that degree—selfish and prejudiced according to the term of their imprisonment. All over the world it is the same; the placidity of self-approval and self-absorption is the result of local isolation. We're not stupid; we merely have so much to look at that we don't care what may take place outside our front gate. But if anybody opens our gate and comes in, he'll have no trouble, because he'll be as much of a New-Yorker as anybody really is."

Silvette laid her head on one side and, drawing the heavy burnished braid of hair over her right shoulder, rebraided the end absently. "Is it," she inquired, "because we are merely attractive that you mentioned the relationship?"

"I'm afraid it's—partly that," he admitted, reddening and glancing askance at Diana.

"Stop tormenting him!" said Diana. "He's candid, anyhow. It's very fortunate all around, anyway," she added naively; though exactly why she considered it fortunate to meet a man with two dollars in his pocket and the legal right to evict her, she did not explain to herself.

Silvette, caressing her braid with deft fingers, mused aloud: "It's very noble of



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

Silvette, caressing her braid with deft fingers, mused aloud: "It's very noble of him to claim relationship up with a bewitching smile that had in it a glint of malice. "Stop torturing me and we know it. What's the use in speculating about



with two poverty-stricken old maids from the Pacific coast. Don't you think so, Diane?" And she glanced
menting him!" repeated Diana. "We're pretty and young, and he knows
what he might have done if we were not attractive?"

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him to claim relationship with two poverty-stricken old maids from the Pacific coast. Don't you think so, Diane?" And she glanced up with a bewitching smile that had in it a glint of malice.

"Stop tormenting him!" repeated Diana. "We're pretty and young, and he knows it and we know it. What's the use in speculating about what he might have done if we were not attractive? He's perfectly satisfied with his Western cousins—aren't you?" glancing up.

"Perfectly," he said.

Diana nodded emphatically. "Do you hear, Silvie? He says he is perfectly satisfied with us, and he is a typical New-Yorker. Therefore, we need not be at all disturbed about our capacity for entertaining anybody, if somebody will only offer us employment."

Silvette looked around at him. "I'd like to have you see us in our afternoon gowns; I believe you'd really be rather proud of the relationship."

"Good Lord!" he exclaimed, half laughing, half annoyed, "I'm proud of it anyway. What on earth do you think a New-Yorker is?"

"We've seen *some*," said Diana meaningly. "Several came here in answer to our advertisement. But we knew, of course, that your type existed, too."

"Have you been—annoyed?"

Silvette laughed. "One man, of very red complexion, inquired if Diana would act as his housekeeper. He had several country places, he said."

"There was a woman came; we didn't care for her," added Diana thoughtfully. Then, lifting her head, she looked at Edgerton with a gaze so pure and sweet, so exquisitely candid, that he felt his heart stop for a moment. Then the blood mounted to his face—to the roots of his hair.

"Take me into your partnership," he said impulsively; "will you?"

"What!"

"Can you? Is it all right?"

"I don't know what you mean!" said Diana.

"Why couldn't I help entertain week-ends with you?"

The proposition seemed to astound them all, even the young fellow who had made it. For a moment they all stood silent; then, pursuing his own impulsive idea toward a plausible conclusion, he said:

"Why not, after all? It would make a bet-

ter combination than two young girls alone. I've clothes—two trunks in there, two more at the customs—London-made and dutypaid! Why not? It's a good combination. The more I think of it the better I like it!"

He began to pace to and fro nervously.

"I know a lot of people—the right kind. I'm not ashamed to ask them to employ me. There is no reason why a Tennant or an Edgerton should not be in their houses."

"But," said Silvette quietly, "the *right* sort of people, as you call them, have no need of asking anybody to aid them in entertaining. It is very generous of you, Mr. Edgerton, but don't you see that services of our kind will be accepted only by—by newcomers, newly wealthy people—those whose circle is small and not very select."

"Yes, that is so," he said so forlornly that Diana watched him curiously, and a delicate color came into her cheeks as he looked up again, eager, radiant.

"That's true," he repeated; "but if I can't do anything in that way for us among the right sort, at least the other kind will have a man to reckon with"—he glanced at Diana grimly now—"when they inquire about housekeepers, and when women whom you do not care for reply to your advertisements."

"That is rather a nice thing to say," observed Silvette, looking at him out of her dark eyes. "But we know—a number of things. We are not a bit afraid, and—you would not care to—endure the kind of people likely to employ us."

"I can endure what you can. I'd like to do it. Would you rather not have me?"

"Why, I—it would be delightful—charming—but we had not even dreamed of such a thing."

He turned to Diana. "Will you let me try?"

She said, confused: "I hadn't thought of such a thing. Could it be done?"

"Why not?" asked Silvette, immensely interested. "When people come, we can say, 'We and our cousin, Mr. Edgerton, are associated as social entertainers.'"

"Oh, if you put it that way they'll think he does Punch and Judy and we dance queer dances!" exclaimed Diana in consternation.

Edgerton threw back his head and laughed, and Silvette caught the infection, and her clear, delicious laughter filled the sunny studio. She showed her white teeth when she laughed.

"Oh, it is perfectly horrid of me to think of such a thing, but I can't help thinking of three trained acrobats," said Silvette, breathless. "Does it seem funny for three of us to be associated in entertaining guests? Does it, Mr. Edgerton? Or am I only frivolous?"

After their laughter had ceased, and their breath had returned, he said: "Wherever we go—whoever employs us—the other guests will suppose us to be guests, too. Only the guilty millionaire from outer darkness with a new house on Fifth Avenue and a newer one in the country will know."

Silvette said, "Do you realize that it is perfectly dear of you to propose such a thing?"

Diana said nothing.

Silvette went on, "I know perfectly well—and you know, too—that your name would be worth almost anything to the wealthy snob who employs us."

Diana said nothing.

"To have an Edgerton as a guest would elevate our prospective employer to the seventh heaven of snobbery," said Silvette. "Diane and I would shine serenely in the reflected relationship."

"Don't make fun of me," he said.

"Why, I'm not. I really mean it. My instincts have been so warped and materialized and commercialized that here I am seriously proposing to make family capital out of the name of one branch of the family. I really do mean it, Mr. Edgerton."

"No," said Diana quietly.

He turned toward her. "Do you vote against me?"

"Yes."

"Don't, please," he said, looking at her.

She met his eye calmly for a moment, then looked at her sister. "Do you think it a decent thing to do?" she asked; "our making plans to live on Mr. Edgerton?"

"Good heavens!" he said impatiently, "my being part of a family combination isn't going to alter your success in any way."

"Your name makes it sure."

"Your youth and beauty and good breeding make it sure. My name has nothing to do with it."

"Then why do you propose it?"

He laughed. "Because I've got to make a living, too."

"There are less humiliating ways of making a living—for you," said Diana steadily.

He looked first at Silvette, then at her,

deliberately, and his face altered. "I want to look out for you," he said, "and that's the plain truth."

"That," observed Silvette, "is the nicest thing he's said yet, Diane." She walked up to him and stood serenely inspecting him. "I vote for you. Diane, let's admit him. We're a poverty-stricken family, and we ought to combine. Besides, I like him to feel the way he does about us—not that it's necessary, of course, but it's—pleasant."

"I haven't any cash," said Edgerton, "but I've this apartment, which nobody can take away even if I starve; and I've some very fine clothes. Won't you vote for me, Diana?" he added so naturally that neither seemed to notice his use of her first name.

Silvette waited a moment, watching her sister; then she said briskly: "Let's dress. We'll inspect your beautiful British clothing, cousin, and you shall see our prettiest afternoon gowns. Then we can tell better how such a combination would look. Shall we?"

Edgerton said to Diana, "Don't you want me?"

She replied slowly, "I—don't—know," looked up at him, straight at him, thoughtfully.

"People may come at any time after two o'clock," said Silvette. "If they find you in flowered silk and a butterfly cash and me in a pigtail, they will certainly expect dances from us and probably Punch and Judy from our cousin."

She laughed, and extended her hand to Edgerton. "I like you, cousin; Diana does, too. When you're dressed in your best, come back to the studio, and we'll arrive at some kind of a conclusion."

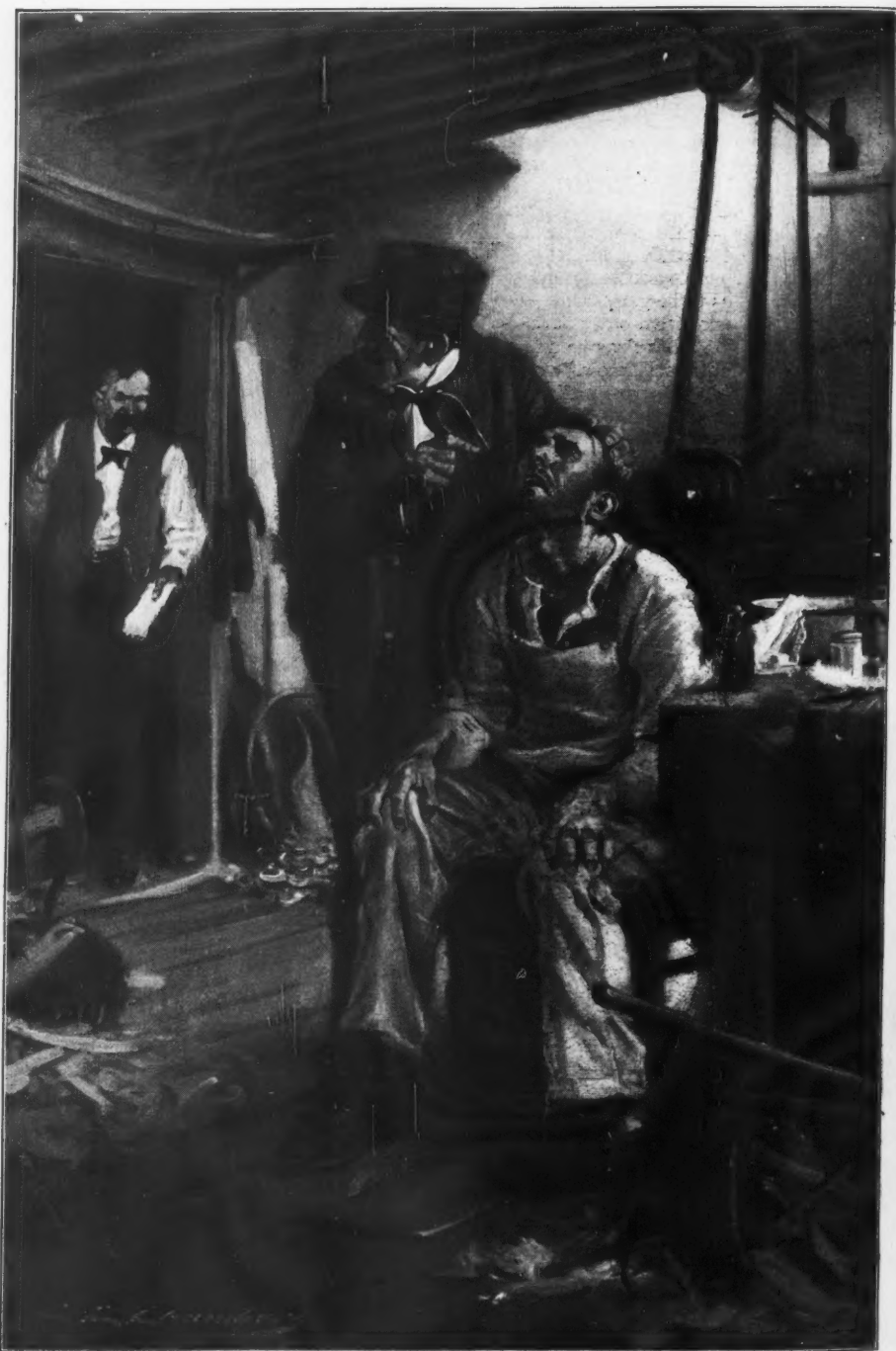
Diana nodded to him as she passed with her sister. The questioning gravity of her expression reminded him of a child who has not yet made up its mind to like you. She wore the bluest eyes he had ever seen, and the most enchanting mouth—the unspoiled mouth of childhood.

When they entered their room he went out by the hallway to his.

Standing there, fumbling with tie and collar, his absent gaze followed the checkered sun-spots moving on the wall as the curtain moved; and, gradually, there in the half light, the blue eyes seemed to take winsome shape and hue, and he said aloud to himself:

"Anyway, somebody ought to look after her. She can't go roaming about like this."

The next instalment of "*The Turning Point*" will appear in the January issue.



DRAWN BY CHARLES E. CHAMBERS

Blackie Daw, who had in perfection what is known as the healer's touch, was extracting, with a huge magnet, an iron-filing from the eye of a fellow workman when Bessmer announced that Eli Spooeger wanted to see him

("The New Adventures of Wallingford")

Get - Rich - Quick Wallingford

If a man can get off a train at the first jerk-water town, stay a few hours, and come away with a thousand easy dollars in his pocket—why work? That is the soul-comforting philosophy of every slick, get-rich-quick crook in the business. It is Wallingford's. But he is slicker than most of them. He is shrewd enough to keep within the law and out of jail. And it is just his unexpected, on-the-spot cleverness in getting out of tight places that keeps you guessing and interested. You may not admire Wallingford's money-morals, but you can't help chuckling with him when he makes his "get-away." He gets away this time with a perfectly good bunch of easy money from the quick sale of another man's stock

By George Randolph Chester

Author of "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," "The Cash Intrigue," etc.

Illustrated by Charles E. Chambers

THE woman in the next room screamed again! Blackie Daw winced in sympathy; Wallingford grinned; the gray-mustached man in the corner sat in patient misery, as he had from the first, and held his swollen jaw.

"I don't think it hurts as much as it did, Jim," decided Blackie, looking up with a hopeful smile. "Stop me; I think I want to go home."

"Stay right where you are and have it out," chuckled Wallingford. "You brought me along to keep you here, and I'll do it if I have to sit on you."

"You won't if I say not!" indignantly swore Blackie, as his riotous tooth gave his nerves another thrust.

The woman in the operating-room emitted a final yelp, which made Blackie grip the arms of his chair and groan because he had thoughtlessly gritted his teeth.

"For that you get another dose," replied Wallingford, aggravatingly cheerful, and, producing a beautifully mounted pocket-flask, he poured Blackie a generous drink.

The quiet man in the corner exhibited his first sign of human intelligence, as his pain-dulled eyes followed that interesting process.

"Have a little relief?" offered Wallingford, who was an habitual good Samaritan with liquor.

"I don't drink, thank you," replied the man, talking cornerwise, and smiling with one side of his mouth.

"Lucky man!" envied Blackie. "Now it'll do you good."

"But I'll take one this time," finished the stranger, eyeing the bottle determinedly.

The dentist, who had tried to conceal his necessarily cruel countenance with a pink mustache, hurried out to the water-cooler with a glass upon which was a bright-red spot, and everybody grew solemn.

"Hello, Bessmer; how's Oak Center?" the dentist greeted the stranger. "Which of you is next?" and brutal speculation kindled his eye as he looked them over.

Both the patients, anxious to put off the moment of agony, indicated each other with surprisingly ready courtesy; but Mr. Bessmer had truth and the right on his side.

"These gentlemen were waiting when I came," he insisted.

"I am only my friend's guardian," explained Wallingford with a happy smile.

"I'm it, I guess," acknowledged Blackie, cornered. "Give me another drink, Jim; quick!"

"I'll be ready for you in a couple of minutes," the dentist cheerfully assured him, and walked into the operating-room, humming a care-free little song!

"I dislike that man," commented Blackie. "He has an unkind face."

A woman, wearing a heavy veil and carrying a much-crumpled handkerchief, came through the waiting-room, followed by the dentist, who rubbed his hands together in pleasant anticipation as he bowed to Blackie. There was an unmistakable gleam of ferocity in his eyes.

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"You may come with me now," he remarked softly.

Blackie arose and followed, with much careless bravery.

"That's excellent whiskey," complimented Mr. Bessmer, beginning to realize the after-taste of it.

"Fifteen years old," replied Wallingford, offering him more, which he declined. "Kentucky friend of mine keeps me supplied. Is Oak Center a pretty fair business town?"

"For some lines," stated Bessmer, with distinct and quite visible inward reservations. "It's really a farming town, and very rich, but it gives slight support to manufacturing."

"You must be a manufacturer," guessed Wallingford.

"I am, in a small way," acknowledged the other, still frowning. "I have a malleable iron foundry, and have secured capacity business, on a process of my own."

"Capacity is good enough."

"The trouble is with the size of the capacity," explained Bessmer with a dry laugh.

"Oh, I see," returned Wallingford, grasping the man's uncomfortable situation at once. "You need a larger plant, and your present one is too small to permit you to earn your increase of space."

In spite of his swollen jaw, Bessmer's intelligent face lighted with pleasure. "It is a treat to have some one understand that," he asserted. "My plant is so small that its net profit barely covers my living expenses. I am compelled to refuse five times as much business as I can do; but when I take my statements to the banks, they look them over and tell me that I am not making a sufficient margin on my present investment to justify an increase."

"That's what chokes a small plant to death," sympathized Wallingford. "It's like lighting a fire to roast one peanut. You could roast twenty pounds of good goobers with the same initial expense."

"I wish I could think of those things to say," sighed Bessmer, with genuine regret. "I'm such a poor talker. Why, with fifty thousand dollars more capital, I could increase, not alone my net earnings, but my percentage of profit on the total investment not less than four times; as it is, I barely hold my credit."

"When a shaky business can't borrow money, it sells stock," observed Wallingford,

with a wisdom born of much experience.

"Are you incorporated?"

"Two hundred and fifty thousand. I've a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of stock in the treasury. The twenty-five thousand I sold of the other half went at fifty per cent."

"I suppose you'd be willing to clean out the treasury shares for your fifty thousand," suggested Wallingford.

The man jumped at that. "Show me how!" he begged.

"You're shamefully honest," mused Wallingford, studying him in minute detail.

"I hope so," returned Bessmer sincerely.

"I think I'll go to Oak Center and look at your plant," decided Wallingford, who had found his present location unproductive. "I have fifty thousand dollars which haven't done a useful thing, except come to me, since they were printed."

Blackie Daw returned from the operating-room with the dentist in a high state of elation.

"Go in and have your teeth tinkered, Jim," he urged. "This gentleman is a friend of mine, and is kind and gentle."

"Mr. Daw had a blackberry seed instead of neuralgia," explained the dentist, smiling. "I'm ready for you now, Mr. Bessmer."

"I suppose I shall see you again, Mr. Wallingford," ventured Bessmer.

"I think so," replied Wallingford, shaking his head at him, and giving a sidelong glance toward Blackie. Mr. Bessmer nodded in comprehension of the warning to be secretive. Wallingford took him by the arm and walked into the operating-room with him, coolly closing the dentist out with Blackie. "I'd rather not have Mr. Daw know anything of our affairs," he explained.

"I guessed as much," smiled Bessmer; "but, at first, I thought he was an intimate friend of yours."

"He's an intimate business rival," denied Wallingford, chuckling. "We have some great fights."

"What is your business, if I may ask?" Bessmer naturally inquired.

"The purchase and sale of stock in unprosperous companies," J. Rufus told him, with a perfectly straight countenance.

Bessmer looked him over approvingly. Wallingford, big, broad chested, flawlessly groomed, well fed, jovial faced, was prosperous and impressive enough in appearance to make that explanation plausible.



"I'm it, I guess," acknowledged Blackie, cornered. "Give me another drink, Jim; quick!"

"I guess you could do it," Bessmer opined with a sigh. "I wish you would think it worth while to take hold of my factory."

"What time do you go back to Oak Center?"

"On the two-forty train."

"I'll ride over with you," promised Wallingford; and they shook hands on it.

II

MR. BESSMER, much relieved as to jaw and with renewed hope as to business, took a seat in the parlor-car of the two-forty train, correctly gaging that the resplendent Wallingford would ride there or nowhere. The train waited its appointed four minutes; its bell clanged; its whistle tooted; its smoke puffed, and it pulled out; and still no Wallingford!

Bessmer suddenly felt weary and old. He had not realized, until now, how critical his business situation really was. The proof of it lay in the fact that he had grasped so desperately at the word of a chance stranger.

"Well, Mr. Bessmer, how's the jaw?" inquired a cheerful voice at his elbow, and looking up, he found Blackie Daw, laden

with a suit-case, a hat-box, an Oxford, and a saxophone-case.

"Haven't any, so far as the feeling is concerned," responded Bessmer, his heart jumping with the sudden memory that Blackie Daw was in the same line of business as the man who had failed him. "I didn't notice you getting on the train."

"You were looking for Jim Wallingford; that's the reason," laughed Blackie, stowing grips in every available corner, and sitting down, like a real sport, with no regard whatever for the tails of his Prince Albert. "I side-tracked him."

Mr. Bessmer contracted his brows, and turned on Blackie a glance of disapproval. "That was not fair to either Mr. Wallingford or myself," he charged.

"It's all in the game," declared Blackie lightly. "I saw he had a business opportunity with you, so I had a phoney telegram delivered to him and sent him on a wild-goose chase; then I made your dentist tell me all about the Bessmer Malleable Process Company, and here I am!"

Mr. Bessmer could not see the joke. "Mr. Wallingford might have purchased my stock," he protested.

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"So might I," Blackie consoled him. "On the other hand, Mr. Wallingford might not have purchased it, and I may not. Tell me the news."

Mr. Bessmer, with much earnestness, told him the news concerning his foundry. He was a sincere little man, anyhow, with a bronzed face, in the brassy wrinkles of which there seemed to cling almost invisible little specks of iron-filings. His gray mustache, as stiff as crinkled wire, stuck straight out past both cheeks, and his intensely blue eyes looked as if they had been tempered in the very bluest flames of his foundry.

Blackie, studying him interestedly while he talked, admired the shrewdness of Wallingford, who had insisted that Bessmer was entirely too honest to be entrusted with the details of even a "square" scheme for his own benefit.

"The figures sound good to me," commented Blackie, after having permitted himself to be bored unto illness by financial statements and computations which meant worse than nothing to him. "I love the mere sound of figures, as long as I can stay awake. The next thing is to see your plant. Would you like to hear me play the saxophone?" He drew his shining silver-filigreed saxophone from its velvet case and caressed it. "This is the button with which you begin 'Home, Sweet Home,' and when I play 'My Old Kentucky Home' I push this one for a starter. I think the latter of those is the sadder," and he began it, to the slowest possible time, but with splendid volume!

Everybody jumped, including Mr. Bessmer. Up in front, Kid McGinnis, the champion welterweight of middle Nebraska, cast one frightened glance behind him, and swaggered peaceably into the smoker. Two young girls, in cherry ribbons, looked back and giggled. A small boy took the vacant chair just across from them, and listened, in ecstasy, with all his eyes, while his mother looked out the window, stonily suppressing a smile. A man, fat enough to have been jolly, glared daggers. A loose-cheeked woman with barely nose enough to mark the apex of her triangle of sour discontent hastily arose and waddled into the next car. She came back presently with the conductor.

"Too bad, old man," consoled the savage-faced boss of the train; "the passengers say they like music."

"Good. I'll play something else," offered Blackie politely.

"Too late," advised the conductor. "The music hour's over till we get to 'Frisco. Going through?" and he grinned with all the startling effect of a friendly bulldog.

"The dickens!" sighed Blackie, putting away his saxophone. "Now, I suppose we'll have to talk business again, Bessmer. What did you say was the percentage of difference between your fiscal year and your overhead expense?"

III

J. RUFUS WALLINGFORD paused opposite the corner of the Bessmer Malleable Process Company, and made a comprehensive estimate of it. It was a more or less toy plant, but radiated the impression of extreme busyness so thoroughly that its walls seemed to bulge and quiver. In the rear of the casting-sheds a dozen men were digging trenches; a big pile of foundation rock was in the center, flanked by barrels of cement; and a wagon of brick was being unloaded.

With a nod of satisfaction Wallingford walked into the office, where Mr. Bessmer, with gray filings on his hat and in his hair and mustache and even clinging to his eyebrows, was bent over a much-soiled building-plan. Two other men, who had clay on their boots and mortar on their clothes, were leaning their elbows on the once neat drawing, and figuring on its margin with pasty blue pencils.

"I'm in no hurry, Mr. Bessmer," said Wallingford cheerily. "When you're not so busy, I'll take up with you the matter of the purchase of that stock."

Mr. Bessmer seemed somewhat embarrassed. "I'm very sorry to say you're too late," he returned, his conscience smiting him that he had helped to trick this friendly big stranger out of a possibly profitable deal.

"You don't mean to say you've sold it!" protested Wallingford.

In spite of his compunctions, a gleam of satisfaction lit Mr. Bessmer's eyes.

"Well," he stated apologetically, "the spot cash was offered me, and now I'm building my extensions."

"I bet I know who bought it," declared Wallingford, with a trace of annoyance.

"Your friend Mr. Daw," admitted Bessmer, flushing slightly. "I'm afraid that he played a rather questionable trick on you, and that I made myself a party to it."

"I can't blame you," pardoned Wallingford, hurt but generous. "Does Mr. Daw now own all your surplus stock?"

"Every share of it."

"Where would I find Mr. Daw?"

Bessmer suddenly laughed. "He is probably out oiling the engine, or trimming castings at one of the emery-wheels to see the sparks, or riding on the warehouse elevator. Shall I send for him?"

"No, thanks," replied Wallingford with careful gravity. "If you don't mind my going through your factory unattended, I'll hunt him up."

With a fair certainty of what he would find, Wallingford walked back through the grinding-shop, and out the side door. Across the yard, on one of the little narrow-gage tracks which ran everywhere, came a black casting-car, rattling and bumping at top speed; and, standing on the buffers, was a tall, lank figure, in new vivid blue overalls and blouse, and wearing a workman's cap tilted rakishly up over one corner of his forehead.

"Can't stop, Jim!" he yelled as he flew past. "They're waiting for this car."

Wallingford, finding no place clean enough to sit down, stood where he was for ten mortal minutes, until Blackie came back with a face which, though well grimed, was perfectly happy.

"I thought you were supposed to stick around the town, in a silk hat, and inspire confidence," complained Wallingford by way of greeting.

"You know, Jim, sometimes I think you're a dub, after all," reproached Blackie. "You never will get the finer points of stage-craft. I had myself made assistant manager, and I'm inspiring so much confidence that, this morning, I had Bessmer lock my own money up in his safe for fear I'd trust myself too far."

"Assistant manager," chuckled Wallingford, who had the born instinct for mechanics of which Blackie had no trace. "What do you manage, principally?"

"The oil-can, till the engineer hid it," Blackie informed him with regret. "He admitted that I was some sure-enough oiler, but objected that the cost of the stuff came off his fuel appropriation. On the level, I'm crazy about this business! Say, do you know, the fireman went home sick last night, and I got here in time to have the safety-valve popping off at seven o'clock. I

have to teach that fellow how to build a fire when he gets back. You do it like this: first you scrape all the ashes and clinkers out of the grate bars, then you put in an even layer of shavings, and build a lattice-work of kindling all over it; then you spread a thin layer of coal on top of that, and light a cigarette, and toss the match under the boiler. Why, two minutes after I blew the whistle, I had the engineer in there—he gets pale when he's excited—fussing with the pump. He says I'm a corker of a fireman; but he has a cheaper man on the job now."

"I don't suppose you've thought of that list," observed Wallingford, in a half hopeless tone.

"I'm so discouraged!" asserted Blackie. "I never get credit for anything. Here's your list. Stay and have lunch with us, Jim?"

"Lunch!" puzzled Wallingford. "Why, you're not over four blocks from your hotel."

"True," assented Blackie; "but am I one to assume airs of superiority over my own intelligent workmen? I treat them as fellow human beings. You see, I intend to run for mayor of my suburb on the reform ticket this fall; so I bring my lunch with me, in a little tin pail, every day, and play them the saxophone at noontime. I've improved a lot in my music, Jim. Shall I come up and play for you to-night?"

"If you do, I'll murder you," declared Wallingford. "You stay away from my hotel until we are through."

On his way out, Wallingford stopped, at Bessmer's invitation, to inspect the plans for the glorious extensions.

"I've dreamed of this for ten years," stated Bessmer happily. "Did you secure any stock?"

"Not a share," answered Wallingford, much disappointed. "Mr. Daw won't sell."

"I sympathize with you," announced the jubilant Bessmer. "The local papers are full of the extensions we're making. I believe we have Oak Center awakened at last to manufacturing possibilities. This stock will be worth real money, by and by."

"I believe it," admitted Wallingford. "I don't mind confessing, now, that I wished to buy it for another corporation."

Not only Mr. Bessmer but the two mortar-decorated contractors looked up at him with sharp attention. The monopoly, eh?

IV

"PETEY WILKS," read Wallingford from Blackie's list; "the leading sport of the village, and might bet as high as two dollars. Wears a gray puff tie on Sundays, and the other two on week-days. Proprietor of father's shoe-store, and almost real devilish. Ten shares."

Armed with that description, Wallingford had no trouble in picking out Petey in Wilks' Shoe Emporium.

"I believe this is Mr. Wilks," guessed the stock-speculator pleasantly, noting that Petey was a particular dresser, and had his trousers pressed.

"That's what they're talking around," assented young Mr. Wilks, who was strong on repartee.

"I understand you have some stock in the Bessmer Malleable Process Company."

"Somebody's been telling," was the glib retort.

"Would you care to sell it?"

"Sell anything but my wife; but I ain't married yet," joked Mr. Wilks, and, this time, he enjoyed a good laugh.

"You're a sly dog," Wallingford complimented him. "What will you take for your ten shares?"

Petey Wilks had the chin of an idiot and the smile of a fool, but he had the eyes of a miser. "Don't reckon I want to sell it," he instantly returned. "The papers are full of how Will Bessmer is making all sorts of improvements."

"It may break him," suggested the coldly businesslike Wallingford, smiling his coldly businesslike smile.

"Will Bessmer ain't a breaker," argued the other. "He's been in business ten years without making any money, but he don't owe anything."

"You paid fifty dollars a share for your stock," stated Wallingford, respecting Petey's shrewdness. "I'm willing to say that it's worth a little more. My firm will pay you sixty dollars."

The eyes of Petey narrowed still more. "Who is your firm?" he asked.

"The United States Malleable Merger Company," announced Wallingford, creating that mighty corporation with no effort whatsoever; "but, after all, you're not dealing with them; you're dealing with spot cash," and he displayed a big red pocket-book so bulged with important bills that the

circulation of little Petey's one pint of blood increased to a whiz. Nevertheless, he steered perfectly straight.

"Do you see anything green?" he demanded, laughing scornfully, and pulling down the lower lid of his right eye. I know what it means when a monopoly's after anything. You'll have to pay me seventy-five dollars a share."

"It's bought," accepted Wallingford, and counted out four bills, a five hundred, two one hundreds, and a fifty, so promptly that it looked like the throw-off of a printing-press. "Where is your stock?"

"I said eighty-five," corrected Petey quickly, glaring accusingly at Wallingford.

"I misunderstood you," and Wallingford, hastily gathering up the money, made as if to start for the door.

"Wait a minute!" called Petey, experiencing pangs as he saw all those warmly tinted engravings disappearing. "I might sell for eighty."

"I said seventy-five," insisted Wallingford coldly, but with his pocketbook still in his hand.

Petey, whose spiderlike legs interfered with each other when he was in a hurry, single-footed back to the safe, produced his certificate, assigned it to Wallingford, and took the pay without the waste of a single avoidable motion.

"Anyhow," he exulted, as he clamped the money carefully in his fingers, "I make fifty per cent. on an investment I thought was dead. I had it five years, and that's ten per cent. a year."

"That's good business," approved Wallingford. "I wonder where I could get some more of this? I understand that Mr. B. F. Croats has a ten-share certificate. Do you suppose he would sell it?"

"Binky Croats?" smiled Petey. "Binky would sell his girl's photograph. He needs the money."

"Thanks for the information," replied Wallingford, and left the store.

He had scarcely passed through the door when a quite natural idea assailed Petey. "I must put Binky wise," he observed, as he hurried to the 'phone. "He's too pinched, just now, to hold out for a good price."

By the time Petey secured his number, however, the faculty which lay behind his miserly eyes had evolved another course of action. "You said, last night, you wanted some money, didn't you, Binky?" he began.

The others in the Wilks shoe-store could hear the sound of Binky's eager voice, like the blast of a trumpet, throughout the room.

"Why don't you sell your Bessmer stock?" suggested Petey. "Oh, yes, somebody ought to buy it. Bessmer's stirring around down there, and it ought to be worth pretty near what you paid for it before long. Ah, shucks! Why, I'll buy it myself, on speculation. Of course I won't give you quite what it cost you, but I'm willing to gamble four hundred and fifty dollars on your ten shares. Don't mention it, old horse. Bring it right down, and get your money; and say, Binky, come the back way, will you?"

Petey Wilks loved that little deal. He could buy his friend Binky's stock, to replace his own, out of Wallingford's money, and have three hundred dollars left!

He need not have hurried, for Wallingford intended to give him at least twenty-four hours to think up the brilliant scheme of buying Binky's stock. Instead, Wallingford went straight to the stockholder whom Blackie had described as follows:

"Thaddeus Putnam; blind in one eye, but can see a dollar at double the distance with the other. Friend of the village mint, who is old Eli Spooger. Fifty shares; but watch Eli, and notice the Hennesey marks in front of his name."

Old Thaddeus looked with stern disapproval on Wallingford's offensively clean shirt, and he steadfastly refused to sell his Bessmer stock at any price.

Wallingford, delighted to find him so obdurate, offered him seventy-five, a hundred, and, finally, a hundred and ten. At that figure he paused, for fear Thaddeus might sell; but Thaddeus did not invite more urging.

"No, sir!" he hoarsely wheezed; "I never go back on my judgment. I bought

my stock from young William Bessmer because I thought he was a coming man; and he is coming. I'll never sell my stock till he proves that I was right; and he's proving it."

"Very well," relinquished Wallingford with a sigh, and now beginning his campaign on Eli Spooger, whose name Blackie had marked with three stars. "Apparently you won't sell, but at least you will not advise your friends to hold on, will you?"

"I'll make no promises of the kind," wheezed Thaddeus, to whom such an idea



"You're dealing with spot cash," urged Wallingford, and he displayed a big red pocket-book so bulged with important bills that the circulation of little Petey's one pint of blood increased to a whiz



Mr. Spoojer gripped his cuffs wildly in both hands and pulled them out arm's length. "You never said a word about buying the extra shares from Wallingford!" he hotly charged Blackie

had not occurred. "My judgment's safe, and I always advise my friends to follow it; if they don't, they can't blame me."

After this, Wallingford went home, well satisfied with his day's work; but he had not finished it, for, just before dinner, Petey Wilks came to him, and jubilantly sold him Binky Croats' stock, battling desperately for eighty-five dollars a share—and winning.

In the morning Wallingford went to see the next ten-share man on the report. "Spraddles Martin," Blackie had listed him. "Keeps books in the plow-factory, and walks like a one-legged turtle. Human Billiken, and I like him."

Spraddles' face was as awkward as his body, and nothing on it seemed to be quite in the right place. His mind was well located and gracefully active, however.

"My Bessmer stock?" he remarked, poking a pen behind his left ear, which was better suited for the purpose than his right one. "I guess you must be the man Petey Wilks wants to sell it to. He tried to buy it from me, last night, at all the way from forty up to eighty-two dollars and fifty cents a share; but I knew that if Petey was willing to pay eighty-two-fifty, it was worth a hundred. I'd 'a' sold it to him for that, but, since

you're a stranger, I'll let you have it for a hundred and ten."

He chuckled cheerfully as he announced this; but he sobered as Wallingford promptly dealt him out eleven hundred dollars.

"I'm afraid I didn't charge you enough," he worried.

"This stock is worth almost any price to my firm," admitted Wallingford recklessly.

"Anyhow, I've got it all over Petey Wilks," Spraddles philosophically consoled himself as he produced the stock. "Are you willing to pay a hundred and ten for all of this you can get?"

"I'll give you a hundred and ten dollars for every share you can bring me to the Eagle Hotel. Just inquire for Mr. Wallingford."

"I wouldn't need your name at the Eagle," declared Spraddles. "I could describe you so well that Curly Washburn would turn around to see if you wasn't standing right there. Will you pay a hundred and fifteen?"

"I might, if you dickered with me hard enough," laughed Wallingford.

"You'll get some of the hardest dickering that was ever done to you," promised Spraddles, reaching an awkward arm for his

coat. "I'm going out and buy stock. I can get to where it is quicker than you can."

"I guess so," sighed Wallingford, with the air of an abused person. "But promise me one thing: whether you secure any stock or not, report to me at the hotel this evening, won't you?"

"All right," agreed Spraddles, and flip-flopped out of the room in earnest haste, without waiting for Wallingford to accompany him.

Perfectly contented, Wallingford returned to his hotel and waited. Spraddles, as he had expected, hunted him up at three o'clock, instead of half-past five.

"You owe me wages, anyhow," he announced, with his oddly shaped grin. "Petey Wilks beat me to it, and even he didn't get any. You'd think Bessmer stock was diamonds, and old Eli Spoooger wanted to have me ostracuted because I only offered him a hundred and five."

Wallingford felt sweet peace surging through him. Eli Spoooger was planted, and ripe! He hurried away from that topic.

"Did you try buying any at the factory?" he asked, eager for news of Blackie.

Spraddles exhibited such alarming manifestations of amusement that Wallingford was on the point of calling a doctor.

"Bessmer's got a new partner," the Billikensaid, when the worst of the symptoms had passed. "He's a long, skinny fellow, and was playing the sailor's hoedown on a horn like a big gourd pipe when I was down there this noon; and Sandy McClintock was patting a big hole in the cinders with both feet."

"Bessmer's new partner must be eccentric," wondered Wallingford, really anxious to know the prevailing opinion.

"I thought he was a fool, but I happened to say so to Tommy Grail, and I nearly got a licking. The men down there are crazy about him. They say he's the busiest kidder in the United States, but there with the large brain, or the straight-arm jab, or any other game."

Wallingford chuckled to himself as he pictured Blackie in his earnest specialty of having a good time wherever he happened to be. "When does the factory intend to start work again?" he inquired, sympathizing with the proprietor.

"Bessmer says they never lose a stroke. He says they laugh more and work harder than any set of men he ever saw. I think I'll get a job down there myself."

"How about the stock?" asked Wallingford, suddenly remembering that he had serious business on hand.

"There isn't any," declared Spraddles. "When I asked Mr. Daw about it, he said that the malleable-casting business was his regular ambition. He's learning to make molds."

V

ELI SPOOGER looked over his glasses at Wallingford with a benevolent smile, and rubbed his bony old knees very, very gently. "Yes, I am Mr. Spoooger," he acknowledged to Wallingford's query, and his voice was full of human kindness; "and you are Mr. Wallingford, I am sure."

Wallingford smiled with fully as much benevolence as Mr. Spoooger had exhibited. "I seem to have been accurately described," he returned, and ceased to study Mr. Spoooger with any degree of curiosity. On the door of Mr. Spoooger's plain but clean little office, in neat script, was the golden text: "Eli Spoooger, first mortgages." On the walls were bright-colored pictures of little children playing with lambs, and happy fathers returning from honest toil to vine-clad cottages, and sweet-faced grandparents playing horsy for the babies; and Wallingford knew, without looking twice, that a benevolent old man who could smile as sweetly as Eli Spoooger would foreclose a widow's mortgage on a snowy night, and prove it to be an act of mercy.

"Certainly," agreed Mr. Spoooger. "Any gentleman endeavoring to buy control in a local concern for the benefit of a trust is sure to be much discussed."

"It's the sad truth," admitted Wallingford, very visibly annoyed by the fact. "The public works a double-swivel spotlight on anyone connected with a big concern such as I am supposed to represent. Personally, I shrink from publicity, but since I can't, what do you want for the Bessmer stock?"

"We are coming on," approved Mr. Spoooger, much gratified. He had been so eager as to be almost impatient. "I have ten shares of my own, and twenty-five shares which I yesterday accepted, from clients of mine, to apply on mortgage payments which were in arrears."

"Thirty-five shares," figured Wallingford in a disappointed tone. "Is that all?"

"That is all for the present," regretfully admitted Mr. Spoooger. "The price will be a hundred and twenty-five."

"Murder!" exclaimed Wallingford, pleased, and yet shocked, that his plans had worked so extremely well. "Why, you are trying to take advantage of what you consider to be my necessity!"

Mr. Spoooger was not indignant; merely hurt in his tenderest feelings. "You are most unjust," he complained. "I am only correctly gaging the market-value of the stock to your monopoly. I have labored to secure them for you, and the laborer is worthy of his hire."

"A hundred and twenty-five isn't laborer's profit; it's robbery," protested Wallingford.

"Tut, tut!" chided Mr. Spoooger, with angelic forgiveness of that harsh charge. "You offered my friend Putnam as high as a hundred and ten; and young Mr. Martin, who was anxious to buy my stock to sell to you at a profit, offered me a hundred and five. The price, Mr. Wallingford, is a hundred and twenty-five. At that quotation I am really conferring a benefit upon you."

"I appreciate it," conceded Wallingford dryly. "How much is thirty-five times a hundred and twenty-five?"

"Four thousand, three hundred, and seventy-five dollars," replied Mr. Spoooger promptly, glancing at some figures on his desk. "Here is the stock," and he drew forward the neat little pile which had reposed just before his eyes.

Wallingford opened his obese pocketbook, and the mild eyes of Mr. Spoooger took on the passing expression of twin needles.

"Of course they will not sell stock to you at the factory," he conjectured, watching hungrily as Wallingford counted out the money, and noticing thirstingly that the subtraction of this amount made scarcely any impression upon the sum total.

"Not a share," laughed Wallingford. "They know who I am, and what I want; moreover, I don't imagine the new assistant manager would sell to anyone who would sell to me."

"Possibly not," mused Mr. Spoooger. "I have heard that Mr. Daw is a very curious person."

He paused, now, as his fingers touched the money, and nothing more was breathed by either gentleman until he had counted it three times, and felt each bill, and held it to the light.

"If I should secure some of his stock, I suppose you would be in the immediate market for it?" he suggested, after he had deposited the money in his safe and twirled the knob about nine times.

"At the present moment," declared Mr. Wallingford, with a trace of vindictiveness, "there is nothing I desire so much as to have every share of the Bessmer stock taken away from Mr. Daw."

"I have understood that there was a deplorable personal feeling in this matter," commented Mr. Spoooger, grieving over the selfish passions of men. "Jim Hodders, who has the brick contract for the new Bessmer building, told me that you were bitter business rivals."

"We are even more than that," stated Wallingford, with every appearance of truthfulness.

VI

BLACKIE DAW, who had in perfection what is known as the healer's touch, was extracting, with a huge magnet, an iron-filing from the eye of a fellow workman when Eli Spoooger called, and he positively refused to talk business in the emergency hospital, which he had fitted up in the neglected pattern-room back of his desk. The workman came out with him, by and by, bandaged, and smiling gratefully.

"Mr. Spoooger's still waiting to see you, Blackie," observed Bessmer. "He's outside in the grinding-room."

"The grinding-room," replied Blackie softly, "is exactly the place for Mr. Spoooger," and Bessmer, thinking he understood that joke, gave it full acknowledgment.

"I wish to talk with you quite in private, just by our two selves," began Mr. Spoooger with kind playfulness, drawing Blackie off into a corner.

"Come over here then," invited Blackie, solemnly leading him into another corner which was no particle more secretive. "Now, what can we do for each other?"

"You might enable me to increase my little investment in this establishment; that is, if you made the price of the stock low enough," suggested Mr. Spoooger, with the air of one conferring a favor.

"I haven't much to sell," Blackie told him, looking decidedly uncomfortable. "I couldn't possibly let go of enough to weaken Mr. Bessmer's control of the company."

Mr. Spoooger was shocked that he should even conceive such an idea. "No one, I am sure, would wish to injure Mr. Bessmer, who is a very honest, hard-working business man. He has the respect, and even affection, of the entire community, including myself. If you chose to sell any of the stock, how much would you want for it?"

"Par," announced Blackie affably.

"My dear young man!" expostulated Mr. Spoooger in stern but kindly tones. "The stock has never been worth more than fifty per cent., and I'll guarantee that you paid even less than that for it."

"Par is the price," Blackie patiently explained. "I have always said that if I ever owned stock in anything I wouldn't sell it for anything but par. I like the sound of the word."

"It doesn't sound half as well as, say, seventy-five dollars, cash," insinuated Mr. Spoooger, laughing like one giving away groceries.

"Par," repeated Blackie, gently but firmly, and lit a cigarette. "At that, I'll only sell you fifty shares. I understand that Jim Wallingford's buying up this stock, and I wouldn't run the risk of much of it falling into his hands. He'd put my friend Bessmer right out of his own shop, and turn it over to the trust."

"I am not an agent or emissary for anyone," stated Mr. Spoooger, much outraged. "I am investing, or speculating, if you wish to call it so, for my own benefit entirely."

Blackie had particular reasons of his own for doubting that, but he did not think it wise to say so.

"Fifty shares or nothing, and at par," he asserted stoutly. "If I sell more than that, I'll sell all. If I have to weaken my majority of stock, I want out entirely."

Mr. Spoooger stilled the pea-like thumping of his heart. "Would you seriously contemplate selling all?" he asked quietly.

"Well, you see," hesitated Blackie, looking mournfully about the shop, and over at Bessmer's office; "I like this business, and Bessmer, and the men, but I'm a poor person, and to sell out at par would mean a big profit on my investment. I wouldn't sell to Jim Wallingford, though. I don't think he'd even come to me to buy it."

This being the strict truth, Blackie had a perfectly clean conscience when he said it.

"I'll take those fifty shares, at par," Mr. Spoooger slowly observed, after thinking a

long, long time. "If I were you, I would not say anything to Mr. Bessmer about it just now. Suppose I come over to-night, and see you at your hotel."

"Make it to-morrow morning at ten o'clock," amended Blackie. "I am not coming to the shop to-morrow forenoon."

Mr. Spoooger was busy writing him out a check. "Here is five thousand dollars for your fifty shares," he stated, holding it with both hands for impressiveness. "Just think how little those fifty shares cost you, and how much profit I am giving you! Multiply that by the balance of your stock, and think it over!"

"I don't like to leave this place," mourned Blackie. "I'm teaching two of the boys, over in the shipping-room, to dance the double clog."

Mr. Spoooger returned to Wallingford's hotel triumphantly.

"I can get you fifty shares of that stock," he announced, delighted to give Wallingford so much pleasure; "but you'll have to raise the price to a hundred and thirty-five dollars."

Wallingford eyed him with a secret sorrow that he was doing the man no harm. "It's extortion!" he protested.

"I can't get it for you for less," declared Mr. Spoooger, seemingly sad that such was the case.

"I don't believe I want it at all," suddenly decided Wallingford.

"Why not?" demanded Spoooger, in breathless fright.

"Because you have only fifty shares of it. My instructions are to secure control, and I'm beginning to be discouraged about it."

"You buy this fifty shares, at the price I named, and I'll tell you some good news," promised Eli with exultant playfulness.

"Do you mean that you can secure all of it?" asked Wallingford eagerly.

"I believe that I can," jubilated Eli, and rubbed his hands over and over each other.

"Then I'll pay you a hundred and thirty-five for this fifty with pleasure," and Wallingford jerked out his pocketbook.

Mr. Spoooger was sorry he had said that he could merely secure the fifty shares; for he had the certificate in his pocket. However, he had made it an early motto that, if he could not entirely avoid evil, he would avoid all appearance of evil.

"I'll be back in ten minutes," he stated.

"You'll be right here, won't you?" and he eyed Wallingford's pocketbook anxiously.

"Right here," Wallingford assured him.

Mr. Spooger was back in nine minutes and a half. "If I can secure the remainder of that stock, I don't think it will be necessary to raise the price above a hundred and thirty-five," he suggested, being quite certain that this was the limit which Wallingford would pay.

"I should say you would not raise the price!" retorted Wallingford. "I may be careless, but I don't mean any harm to myself."

"Will you pay a hundred and thirty-five?" Spooger wanted to be assured.

"I will pay a hundred and thirty-five dollars a share for every share of Bessmer stock that you sell me from now on," Wallingford truthfully answered.

VII

A LOVER, counting the minutes until he could see his twin soul, would be an oyster of placidity compared with Eli Spooger waiting for his appointment with Blackie Daw. He went down to the factory in the afternoon, but was refused permission to enter the yard, where, it seemed, Mr. Daw was feverishly engaged on some important preparations for a sort of workmen's celebration on the following night. He called at Mr. Daw's hotel that evening, but was told that Mr. Daw was taking his saxophone practice, and could not be disturbed; and the clerk was pleasant about it, too.

Taking the hint from these rebuffs, Mr. Spooger waited until sharp ten o'clock the next morning, when he was ushered into Mr. Daw's rooms. He found that gentleman freshly shaven and completely dressed except for his silk hat, and sitting behind a table, studiously poring over a handbook on the art of molding and casting.

There ensued a most wily conversation, in which Mr. Spooger pointed out to the young man that he must not fly in the face of Providence by refusing the handsome fortune that lay at his door.

On his part, Mr. Daw had conscientious scruples about allowing the controlling stock to pass into any ownership which might be inimical to the interests of Mr. Bessmer; but in the end he fell! He stifled his conscience, and sold to Mr. Spooger, at one hundred dollars a share, his entire inter-

est in the Bessmer Malleable Process Company.

"But I didn't know you had so much stock," protested Mr. Spooger. "Bessmer only had twelve hundred and fifty shares to dispose of in the first place. I bought fifty of those from you, and here you are offering me thirteen hundred and fifteen."

"I acquired a few more," explained Blackie. "The certificates are all here, new issues made out to me last night, and duly signed by the president and secretary."

"The more the better," granted Spooger after a little thought, and added twice more, to make sure, the total shares represented by the certificates. He produced his check-book.

"You'll have to come across with genuine money," observed Blackie before the purchaser started to write. "I had to be identified to cash that other check of yours, and I don't like to have bankers look at me as if they think me a suspicious character."

"You don't want cash for this amount!" protested Mr. Spooger. "It's entirely irregular. Why, man, it's a hundred and thirty-one thousand, five hundred dollars!"

"I can carry that much," Blackie boastfully assured him. "Feel my muscle."

"I know; but the banks won't like it," worried Mr. Spooger, who was as well acquainted as any man on earth with the reluctance of real money to be moved about.

"If we do it the other way, I won't like it," Blackie serenely argued. "I'd like to accommodate the bankers well enough—they're nice men; but they never seem to want to accommodate me. No, it'll have to be cash, Mr. Spooger."

"Well, I'll see if I can get them to honor the checks," reluctantly granted Mr. Spooger; "but we may have to go to all three banks."

"As many as you like," consented Blackie, most amiably. "I'll assign you these certificates before we go."

"I don't know about that," hesitated Mr. Spooger, but Blackie was already writing the assignments upon the backs of the certificates as carelessly as if he were inscribing his room number on a bar-check.

"You keep the certificates a while, then," Spooger cautiously directed, and, when they were down in the lobby, he called up Bessmer.

"Is Mr. Daw all right?" he wanted to know.

"I'll vote for him," stated Bessmer; "and I know all the men in the shop will back him."

"He wants to sell me thirteen hundred and fifteen shares of stock in your corporation."

"I am sorry," replied Bessmer with genuine regret; "but they're his shares. He paid cash for them; and he may do with them as he likes."

"But how did he get so many?"

"Bought them."

Mr. Spoooger considered. "Then I can't get stung if I do business with him?" he ventured.

"I didn't, and I don't see how you can," Bessmer emphatically assured him. "Those shares are worth a hundred dollars apiece."

"I'll carry those certificates now, Mr. Daw," Mr. Spoooger kindly offered.

Blackie took them out of a little wooden box, and Mr. Spoooger leafed through them to see that they were all there. They bulged his inside coat-pocket frightfully, but he did not mind.

He went with Blackie to the three banks, and persuaded the much-pained gentlemen in charge to relinquish, collectively, one hundred and thirty-one thousand, five hundred dollars, in genuine United States currency; then he and Mr. Daw parted.

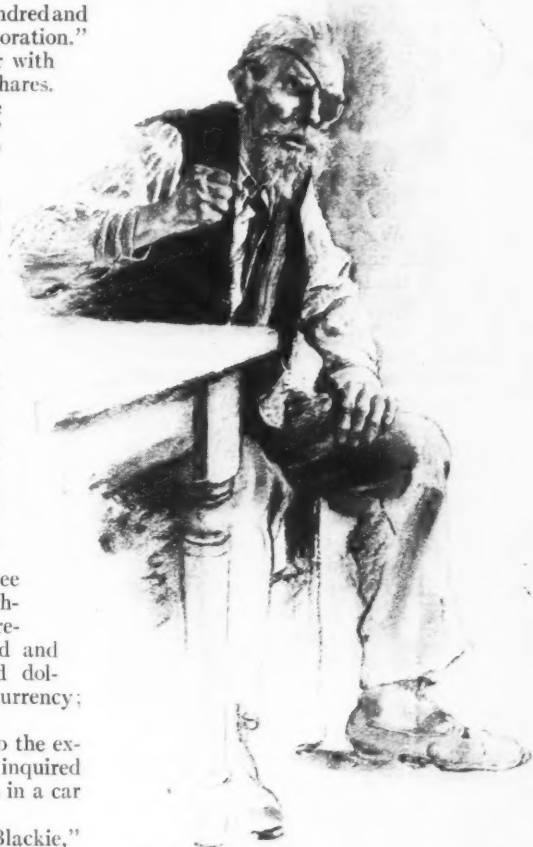
The latter gentleman dashed into the express-office, next to his hotel, and inquired how soon they would put packages in a car headed for New York.

"In just thirty-five minutes, Blackie," replied the express-agent. "We'll be starting for the train in about a quarter of an hour. How's the new tune coming on?"

"Fine," boasted Blackie, as he went behind the railing to wrap and address his box of money. "I can play it half-way through without taking a breath. Come down to the factory to-morrow night and hear me."

"I intended to fish around till I got an invitation," laughed the expressman. "There's some heavier paper over there. Tommy Grail was telling me of the big blow-out you intend to give the boys. He says you put it on Saturday night so they could sober up by Monday morning. What's in this box?"

"Oh, a lot of souvenir junk I'm sending home," answered Blackie carelessly. "Regular valuation; not to exceed fifty dollars."



"Thaddeus Putnam: blind in one eye, but can see a dollar at double the distance with the other"

Meanwhile, Mr. Spoooger, with an ashen face, was being informed that Mr. Wallingford had left the city. Mr. Spoooger's first thought was swift, direct, and natural to his mind. "The swindler!" he gasped.

"Who said so?" demanded Curly Washburn. "I'll tell him that when he comes back."

"Is he—is he coming back?" begged Spoooger, breathing with renewed hope.

"Of course, he is," stated Curly indignantly. "He has a trunkful of clothes here that I wish he'd leave behind, and there's so much of his money in that safe I dodge every time I pass it. He only took a hand-

bag with him. Did he swindle you out of anything?"

"Well, no," admitted Mr. Spooeger reluctantly.

"Then don't go around saying it," ordered Curly, and walked away in silent contempt.

VIII

THE merriment in the festively lighted yard of the Bessmer Malleable Process Company was at its height when Eli Spooeger, learning that Wallingford had gone straight there from the nine-o'clock train, repaired to the scene of the festivities.

A big table, built in the form of a hollow square, spread with a snowy cloth, and decorated with carnations, champagne-pails, and whole roast pigs, to say nothing of chickens and such minor articles of inner comfort, filled the yard; and, at the center of the head table, flanked by Wallingford on one side and Bessmer on the other, stood Blackie Daw, in his blackest Prince Albert, making a farewell speech to his many friends, in and out of the factory, and inviting them, one and all, to move to Tarryville, so that they could vote for him for mayor, on the reform ticket, in the coming fall.

Laughter interrupted his every sentence, cheers followed his every pause, and in the very air there was a thrill which told that he could march the entire concourse, at that very moment, right out into the jaws of anything, and come back with the teeth!

It was all very reassuring to the only man in Oak Center who could command over a hundred thousand, cash, and when the final applause had subsided, the three-starred one bent, with an ingratiating smile, over the back of Wallingford's chair.

"I have that stock for you," he happily confided; "right here," and he tapped his bulging breast-pocket.

"Oh, yes, the stock," returned Wallingford pleasantly. "Why, Mr. Spooeger, my firm has decided not to bother with the Bessmer company." He paused placidly to watch Mr. Spooeger clutching at his Adam's apple; "so, last night, before I went away, I sold what I had purchased, from you and from others, to Mr. Daw."

Mr. Spooeger gripped his cuffs wildly in

both hands and pulled them out arm's length. "And you sold it to me!" he hotly charged Blackie. "You never said a word about buying the extra shares from Wallingford!"

"Tut, tut!" remonstrated Blackie kindly. "You didn't tell me you intended to sell to Wallingford."

"You fooled me!" frothed Eli, turning to the representative of the trust. "I don't want this stock."

"Throw it away, then," advised Wallingford. "I'd suggest that you keep it, though. By a resolution adopted almost unanimously last night, Mr. Bessmer has the right, at any time within the next ten years, to purchase it at par, and I think he's going to make some money."

"That stock's worth all it cost you," sternly declared Bessmer, who did not yet understand how it had all happened, and never would. "It may not pay dividends for five years to come, but I'll bring it to par value before then."

"Did you help get me into this, Will Bessmer?" half shrieked Spooeger. "I'll make it hot for you! Remember, I hold a majority of stock!"

"You can help vote to repaper the office, or to adopt pink stationery; but that's about all," Blackie informed him. "The constitution of Mr. Bessmer's company, amended at our regular stockholders' meeting last night, when you owned no stock, gives him the final say, in the management and direction of the concern, for the next ten years."

"That's one of the reasons my monopoly did not care for the stock," suavely explained Wallingford, chuckling about something or other.

"It's a swindle!" yelled Spooeger, purple with rage.

Blackie Daw arose and confronted him, pale with outraged indignation. "A repetition of that charge, and I shall sue you for libel!" he warned.

"Put him out!" shouted the expressman indignantly.

Seven men arose to their feet, and then the whole crowd got up. Spooeger did not wait.

"Gentlemen," said Blackie Daw, bowing his thanks, "will some one kindly hand me my saxophone?"

The next story of "*Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford*" will appear in the January issue.

The Third Person

What do you think you would do if your husband were in love—or you thought he was—with another woman and you met that woman face to face? Can you imagine the possibility? Do you think you would keep your temper, or would you be apt, like most mere men if the tables were turned, to “start something”? This is one of the situations which confront the woman in this story of Mrs. Van Vorst's. She has other things to settle, too, before her husband gets back home—and the way she does it and what happens will interest you. Incidentally, a lot of husbands will take pleasure in seeing what even a jealous woman can do when she stops being “bug-house” and gives her brain a chance

By Mrs. John Van Vorst

Author of "The Sin of George Warrenner," "In Ambush," etc.

Illustrated by Hanson Booth

II

AS WE stood round the table taking our coffee, Mrs. Welch turned to her other guests, leaving *her* and me alone together. Now that the chance had come to satisfy my curiosity, I was frightfully intimidated; my heart was beating fast, and I could not possibly have spoken. She made some stupid remark about hoping that we were to see more of each other than we had during the early part of the winter. Then, flippantly, she rattled along about how her plans had changed. She had been going to Palm Beach with her mother, but one of her married sisters who was ill had decided that she needed a trip to Florida.

“So,” she added, smiling quite condescendingly at me, “I shall be keeping house all alone, and you really must take pity on me.”

I was trying as hard as I could not to hate her. If she had only been awfully intelligent I might have understood how Jack could prefer talking with her. At least, this was the way I felt; but I suppose, as a matter of fact, that if she had been really brilliant, then I could only have understood his caring for a beauty. Well, she's awfully pretty; that I can't deny, wretched as it makes me.

Of course neither of us spoke of Jack.

There was a perfect turmoil of malicious feeling surging up in me while she talked. It quite stifled me when I thought that this woman and Jack had perhaps spent more than one hour tête-à-tête. The very image

that such a picture presented to my mind was unbearable. My feelings were perfectly uncontrolled. I could easily have harmed her, hurt her, done her some physical injury. I felt as furious as the women one reads about who murder through jealousy. The only real level of feminine equality seems to be this green-eyed passion. It brings the queen and fish-wife to a common state of uncontrolled misery, in which they become oblivious of self-respect and honor. All means seem justifiable: opening other people's letters, searching through the husband's private papers, employing spies to follow up the innocent suspect, resorting, even, to anonymous communications. The things which we absolutely detest in other women present themselves, when we are jealous ourselves, as imperative clamorings for justice.

While I talked to *her*, my mind was busy planning a dozen ways whereby I could spy out her meetings with my husband. The intensity of my feelings made it easy for me to control myself: speaking would have been the difficult thing.

She babbled on. She actually dared to admire my gown. It was the only pretty one she had seen in an age. The fashions were really too grotesque this year, didn't I think so? Especially hats? They seemed to get more extraordinary each season, she said, and I listened to her and acknowledged inwardly how undeniably pretty she was.

If I controlled myself it was because of my pride, my vanity, really. I wouldn't have had her suspect for anything in the

world that I knew she had ever seen Jack alone or that it made the slightest difference to me if she had.

Things went all very well while she talked about the fashions. Presently, however, she made a remark which set my tongue tingling. I couldn't help responding. Looking at the lamp on Mrs. Welch's library table, she stretched out her beautiful arm and touched the shade with a caressing gesture which showed to perfection the delicate transparency of her finger-tips.

"What an original lamp!" she said, dreamily. "I wonder where Mrs. Welch found it." Then she added with a cat-like smile, "I've never seen one like it before."

"Oh, yes, you have," I blurted out; "we have one exactly the same down at the studio."

She turned her graceful head with a little toss. "But you know, my dear," she said, "I have never been in your husband's studio. That is a pleasure which has often been promised me, but never realized."

Just then the men came back from the smoking-room. It was fortunate, for I think that I would have told her face to face that she was a deceitful thing. Instead of doing this, I turned to one of the men who had joined us and said in a perfectly mean way:

"We were having a deep discussion about the importance of telling the truth. It's rather a serious subject, you see, but we don't agree. I maintain that it's never justifiable to deceive."

Before the man could respond, she had answered, with an angelic smile, "Oh, but you can save so much suffering by a little legitimate fibbing."

I suppose she thought that by lying about never having been in the studio, she had spared my feelings!

I sat with my eyes down, turning between my hands a beautiful fan Jack had given me when we'd been married five years. I remember that something had jarred on me just before he gave it to me, the night of our anniversary, and that I had not shaken off my ill humor the whole evening. Oh, the bitterness of a lost chance! In the reflection of the ivory sticks I fancied I could see Jack's face as it looked that night, with its expression of chagrin, of disappointment, that he had not succeeded in making me happy.

Here the man who had sat on my other side at dinner came up and joined me. He

said I looked as solemn as an owl. Over in the corner I could see *her* deep in conversation with Mr. Welch. Poor Mrs. Welch!

February 23d.

WHEN I came home that night, there was a telegram from Jack on the hall table. I opened it nervously, not knowing really whether I cared if he were coming back or not. It read:

Arrive Saturday for dinner, bringing Dickson and Strickland with me. Dinner at eight. Love.

JACK.

The maid who always sits up to "unhook me" was waiting for my return with that uneasy expression servants wear when they have a message to deliver. It was a strange message. She said Jack's secretary had come up from the office just after I started for the Welches' dinner. He wanted especially to see me. The maid went down to ask if it were something he could explain to her. He said he begged a thousand pardons; he couldn't understand how it had slipped his memory, but Mr. Clarke had gone off so suddenly and left him with a quantity of work.

I thought she would never come to the point, repeating details.

"Well, was that all?" I asked impatiently.

"No, madam, Mr. Clarke's secretary said that Mr. Clarke said for you not to worry about your little bag, that you had left in the studio. Mr. Clarke had run into the studio a moment before starting, thinking you might be there. He didn't have time to send the bag up to you, madam, but he says it is all right. He took the papers out of the bag."

That means, Jack took the letter! Then he knows that I know. And he is coming home the day after to-morrow. How shall I greet him?

February 24th.

JACK comes home to-morrow! I have one day more before me. The situation is simply this: my husband is having an affair with another woman. At first he was the only one to know about it, and the question was, What would he better do? Then I found the letter from the other woman to him: that raised the question of what I'd better do. Finally, Jack finds out that I have read the letter. Now we both know



DRINK BY HANSON BOOTH

She turned her graceful head with a little toss. "But you know, my dear," she said, "I have never been in your husband's studio. That is a pleasure which has often been promised me, but never realized"

The Third Person

and know that we know, and the question is, What are we both going to do?

After a day's reflection I am as far as ever from a decision.

This morning my maid brought my breakfast to me on a tray while I was still in bed. When we were first married, and were not well off at all, I used to get up before Jack did every morning and made a point of seeing that his breakfast was just as he likes it: good corn-bread and crisp bacon and hot coffee, everything appetizing. Of course we had a cook, but we paid her only sixteen dollars a month, and if Jack got what he liked to eat then, I guess it was because I guided that green Irish cook's hand fairly often.

Now we have a French cook. We pay her forty-five dollars a month. She gives Jack *toast* in the morning! I wouldn't exactly dare go into the kitchen and show her how to make corn-bread. Moreover, by the time the coffee has stood in the kitchen waiting for the kitchen-maid to put it on the dumb-waiter, and the coffee-pot has been arranged on the silver tray in the pantry by the butler, the coffee is quite cold, Jack says. I get mine hotter up in my room, and, besides, having a man to serve us took away all the intimacy of any conversation between Jack and me, so I gradually dropped out of the morning combination, leaving poor darling Jack to struggle by himself.

I've often noticed that when you begin going in for real luxury you have to say farewell to real comfort.

Breakfast is the only meal in the day when I might have any chance at my husband alone. He lunches down-town, of course, and for dinner we either go out or have some one in every night.

So much for the beginning of the day. As for the evening, I believe this, too, is open to improvement. When my husband comes home at night, his first choice on arriving at the house is me. Jack always looks for me or calls out as soon as he opens the front door. I must confess he doesn't often find me. This is a mistake. What generally happens when I am out is as follows: Jack, not having anyone to speak to, gets interested either in some book or in the evening paper, or else he takes a bath, so that when I come home he is absorbed in reading, or locked in the bathroom, and I feel slightly neglected. His seeming indifference is the fault of no one but myself.

Men really are very easy to manage.

To-day I was buying a pair of scissors. The ones I wanted were rather stiff. I asked if they didn't need oiling or something. The salesgirl said, "Just run your hand along them and they'll go better."

It's the same with husbands.

But the trouble is, I believe, that we mix up the privileges of love with the rights of marriage. They don't preclude each other. One of the rights of marriage, for example, is that I expect Jack to come home every night. One of the privileges of love is that I should make him happy when he gets home. The women who look upon happiness as something due them instead of something they should try to deserve, generally end up with nervous prostration.

February 25th.

THE days drag along!

Jack has postponed his return until tomorrow night. I'm awfully lonely without him. I suppose half of married life is only habit. As a poor woman once said to me (she had lost two children, one an angel, the other a villain):

"I sure do miss Jim the most. It was him that give me the most trouble."

Since Jack went away I haven't for the slightest fraction of a second thought of anything else but him and our present situation.

Probably he has been absorbed in his work and only given me a casual remembrance now and then. Perhaps he recalls *her* more often!

Oh, if I could only believe that letter untrue! If Jack had only forged it just to worry me and see how much I really loved him, I would be the happiest woman in the world. Then I would have my chance all over again. I could start fresh and be so much more the kind of wife who would make Jack happy. But the question is, Knowing what I know of Jack's affair with this other woman, can I possibly rise to the situation and be anything but a broken-hearted, miserable wife, jealous and full of remorse?

What combination could be worse?

Ah, me! Why don't our mothers train us up to be *wives*? Why don't they tell us something about man, the real man? They have been married before us and so have our grandmothers. They have found out something by experience. Yet never a word crosses their lips. The night before

my wedding, when my mother came for the last time to tuck me in, she had tears in her eyes, and as she kissed me she said sadly:

"God bless you, my darling. How I hope you may be happy!"

Never for a moment did she tell me what I ought to do in order to *be* happy. I would have supposed that happiness was a meteor which might, or might not, happen to fall in my vicinity. If she had only said to me:

"Little girl, you have got every chance in your favor. You're marrying an honorable man who loves you. Your happiness and his are in your keeping. Remember that love is as frail as a hothouse plant. If you don't tend it, cherish it, nurture it constantly, it will perish. Be humble and be sweet. This man, your husband, works from morning till night. He wishes to bring the fruits of his labor to you alone. Be his recompense. Never, above all, never let your pride get the upper hand. How many women do you see who sacrifice their lives to their husbands and whose pride remains an insurmountable obstacle to their happiness? Suppose you begin by sacrificing your pride and devoting your life to your husband. Little girl, it's all in your hands. Reflect, be wise, be tender."

But she said none of this. Instead of

making me feel that the responsibility rested with me, she suggested by her sadness that I was destined to be a victim. So I started out with a sort of latent hostility. I felt that everything that went wrong was my husband's fault and that all married women would condole with me in any grievance I might have against him.

Yet, as I think things over in cold blood, waiting for Jack's return, and not having the slightest idea what attitude I'm going to take when he gets here, I can't admit that the wrongs are all on my side, no, not even in the most penitent humility.

There really is some foundation for the reputation men have. They're supposed, among us women folk, not to be very penetrating. This defect is convenient, I suppose, when you want to deceive them, but I'm sure their eyes would better be opened. I would like to write a Manual for Husbands. I think it might save them sometimes from doing the *right* thing at the *wrong* moment. The motto for a man to adopt with a woman is,

"Bide your time."

A remark you made yesterday, Mr. Husband, to Mrs. Wife, was taken joyously. To-day you repeat the same idea, and feathers fly. You didn't bide your time. Mrs.



"Mr. Clarke's secretary said that Mr. Clarke said for you not to worry about your little bag, that you had left in the studio. He took the papers out of it"

Wife wasn't in the same mood to-day as yesterday, and with us it is all moods. But for Heaven's sake don't let us know you think so!

"You're not feeling well," says Mr. Husband sympathetically, "that's why you are taking such a nervous view of things to-day."

Mrs. Wife bristles with indignation. "It's a pity I have to be treated like an invalid or an idiot!"

The next day, when the waters begin to ruffle, Mr. Husband tries the other tack. "Such a reasonable woman as you are, my dear, I should have supposed could take a perfectly sane view of any question."

"Can't you see," answers his wife, almost in tears, "that I am suffering perfect agony with neuralgia?"

Bide your time, sir.

Remember that every woman, deep down in her heart, wants what the man she loves wants. But she likes, in sentimental matters, to take the initiative. She does not want even the smallest of her graces to be taken advantage of as a right. By insisting, sir, you can lose all. You must never tire of, so to speak, playing the game. When she seems indifferent, be a little more indifferent yourself. Don't touch her!

Her indifference is the result of her being slightly on the defensive. If you are all eagerness, she will become perhaps even hostile. On the other hand, the minute you show yourself indifferent, her true instincts of coquetry are roused, she sees there is something to win, and she wants to win it.

Now, on the contrary, when she seems hurt, you can't show yourself too tender. Give her all the love you can, real love, and *try to express yourself in words*. Don't forget that the true woman's heart and soul must be won first before she gives you, willingly, even the tips of her fingers to kiss.

This is what I would say to husbands in general, but I wouldn't dare say it to my own!

February 26th.

It's for to-night—the dinner with Jack's friends and Jack.

To-day is Sunday, so I turned the evening meal into supper, to the horror of my French cook. I've ordered stewed oysters and creamed sweetbreads and hot chocolate and cold champagne and every indigestible delicious thing I could think of that wasn't

French, and I'm going to make corn-bread myself! I feel ten years younger and free as a bird. The cook said my menu was opposed to all the "*principes de la cuisine*," but I'm getting what I wish at last, and what my husband likes.

I can't help wondering why Jack is bringing these men home to supper with him. It seems as though he didn't want to see me alone for the first time after what has happened. Knowing that I know, he feels ashamed, perhaps. I hate to think that Jack could do a thing that would make him reluctant to look straight into my eyes.

How shall I act? I don't know. I haven't really got any proof against my husband, because the letter is no longer in my keeping, and the two selves in me are always warring—as they are in every woman. We all have the slave-like, happy, feminine self, humble, submissive, ignorant, archaic; and all of us have the modern self, proud, unbending, recalcitrant, with a smattering of knowledge and great ideas on emancipation and the equality of the sexes. It would be perfectly easy for my slave-like self to forgive and to forget. But my suffragette personality cries out its indignation at being betrayed, clamors that justice be performed against the unfaithful man.

Meanwhile, between the two, my will is broken, and I can make no decision. Last night I determined to go to the train and meet Jack. In that way, as there are two men with him, we could be alone in the automobile coming up from the station, and, as it is a pretty long drive, I could have a chance to tell Jack what I think of him, how I have suffered, how he has wounded and insulted me, how I can never forgive him, how *she* pretended at the Welches' dinner that she had never been in the studio, what an outrage it was for him to choose some one in our very own set and submit me to the added humiliation of meeting her on every occasion. I hardly slept all night, thinking of the indignant speeches I was going to make to my husband.

Now it's five o'clock. I've just had tea all by myself in the library, and my whole spirit is changed. Sunday afternoon is such a horribly lonely time. If Jack were only here this minute!

I've decided to put on his favorite dress to-night and be all ready when they arrive at the house.

If he were only coming alone!



As Jack caught sight of me I could hear him saying, "We're evidently expected, you see."
His voice sounded happy

Sunday, seven o'clock.

TRIUMPH of triumphs! I've made the corn-bread and baked it myself.

My cheeks are flushed still, though I've had a cold bath trying to calm my nerves. The maid told me when I finished dressing that I was "looking beautiful." Jack loves this dress.

There! I hear the automobile at the door! What shall be the next page of my journal?

March 1st.

No one could be more surprised than I at what happened. I hurried down-stairs. Jack and the others were in a taxicab at the door. It took a moment to make change and pay the chauffeur. I had drawn the parlor curtains and was standing in the window. As Jack caught sight of me I could hear him saying, "We're evidently expected, you see." His voice sounded happy.

Just what took place when they all got into the parlor, I don't exactly remember, except that my blood suddenly froze in my veins. I simply held out my hand to the men and to my husband in the same formal way. I could not have looked into Jack's eyes for anything in the world, and I was utterly miserable.

Jack suggested taking the men up-stairs for a wash, as they were just off the train.

"What time is dinner?" he asked, in as offhand a way as possible. He had gone as far as the hall, and I let the butler, who was standing there, answer,

"Quarter to eight, sir."

"You'd better make it eight," Jack answered.

In the few minutes I waited for the men to come down-stairs, it was just as if I had taken a drug. I went into the library and sat down in a deep armchair, my head resting against the back, listless, scarcely breathing. After a long time, when it seemed as though my strength were slipping entirely away from me, I heard Jack's voice.

He brought his friends into the library. Dinner was announced. I got up. Everything became perfectly black.

When I regained consciousness, I was in my own room, in bed. A wonderful sense of peace came over me, and as I half opened my eyes, I saw my husband sitting by the bedside. For a few moments I simply lay there, pretending still to sleep. Then I put out my hand softly, found Jack's and drew his arms round my neck.

"Jack, darling," I whispered, "I love you better than anyone in the world."

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"I adore you."

"Not as much as I do you."

The Third Person

He held me a long time in his arms, telling me how terribly alarmed he had been when I fainted in the library.

"Did I really faint?" I asked.

"A bona-fide exhibition, I should say. Fortunately Strickland is a doctor, and he brought you around all right."

"I remember nothing," I said.

"You came to for an instant, spoke to me, and then fell into a natural sleep."

There was silence for a time. I was leaning against Jack, so close I could hear his heart beat. I asked him,

"When I spoke, Jack, what did I say?"

He smiled. "Something very sweet."

I was longing to know what, but he did not tell me then, and I could not make up my mind to ask questions. I was resting as though some fever had left me. I did not want to return to my old state of mind.

With a twinkle in his eyes, Jack said finally, "Aren't you dying to know what you said when you came to?"

"If you care to tell me," I answered.

He bent over and whispered something, and I burst out laughing. What I had said was,

"Oh, Jack, I've made you some corn-bread for supper!"

With all the emotion I had lived through during the past few days, the only impression registered on my subconsciousness was corn-bread.

At first I couldn't talk very much with my husband. Words, I thought, would come later. For the moment I just showed him "all the love I could conjure up." I lived in the present. And so I have been doing for three days now. It has been like crossing for the first time a torrent on a newly reared bridge of my own building. At every step I trembled lest the whole structure cave in. But even such uncertainty is better than battling against the current as of old. During those days of solitude and reflection when my husband was away, my feelings were tried out in the crucible. The nugget that remains is pure gold. I know now that, stronger than any dross of jealousy in my heart, is my unalloyed love for Jack.

And yet, more intense than my will to efface it, there remains a shadow across my life. It's *her* shadow. I try my best to interpose sunshine enough to swallow it up. Perhaps with time it will fade by itself.

March 15th.

THE days go by, and I seem too busy to write in my diary, although there is still much that I can say to no one.

My husband appears contented, but tired and nervous. He says he wants to get away and take me South. I have moments of adoring him, but there are times when I seem to feel nothing at all any more. None of the old hostility or irritation at little things has returned. All that could be an unreal cause for suffering I have eliminated by dogged self-control. I am sure that I love Jack better than anybody else in the world and that I want to make him happy, yet I can't do this altogether while on one point there is a reserve which I cannot overcome.

How I wish that there might be an explanation!

I am so fearful now of yielding to the old jealousy that I remain silent. Yet I can see that something is weighing on Jack's heart.

March 25th.

A QUEER thing has happened. It may change my whole relation toward Jack. Yesterday, after lunch, in that dreary hour when it's too early to make calls, too late to take a walk, that dull time for us women when the only resource is shopping, I was sitting in the library doing nothing. Presently the butler appeared at the door, and without asking if I wished to receive, he simply ushered in the person I least cared to see. *She* actually had had the audacity to call when she was sure of finding me at home. I hadn't seen her since that night at the Welches' dinner. She was looking even prettier than ever, with her close-fitting velvet gown and her fur toque.

For a while we talked about the weather, the theater. Then she grew very serious.

"There's something I want to say to you," she said.

"Indeed?" I responded.

"Yes. It's a very delicate matter. You might have known that I wouldn't have dropped in at such an hour if I hadn't had something important to say."

"I really can't imagine what it is," I replied. "We so seldom have the pleasure of meeting."

"For about six weeks," she began, "I've been in great trouble. A love affair, of course. In fact, I might say two love affairs."

"One of the head, and one of the heart?"

My tone was icy.

"Exactly. I knew you would understand. I can't consult my brother-in-law, Mr. Welch," she continued. "You know how it is in families. The minute you give them a keynote they compose a whole symphony. Yet I am really very unhappy. There were these two men, as I tell you, both making desperate love to me. One, a lawyer, free, rich, and crazy to marry me. The other poor, an artist, and—married."

The lawyer I esteemed and respected. I thought it a tremendous chance, only there wasn't that irresistible sympathy—"

"Which you feel for the poor married artist," I finished for her.

"Of course our friendship was absolutely harmless," she protested, seeing how well I was beginning to understand. "Though I confess I flirted horribly. He concluded—men are so vain—that I really cared for him. When he heard that I was

probably going to marry the lawyer, what do you think he did?"

"I really can't imagine," I said, getting interested in the story when I saw that my husband was neither the lawyer nor the artist.

"He took one of the letters I had written him, put it in an envelope and sent it to the lawyer. Of course the lawyer recognized my handwriting."

"If there was nothing in your affair but 'harmless friendship,' what difference did it make?"

"Oh, it made lots of difference. It wasn't perhaps exactly a love-letter, but it was tender; it could have been, and was, inter-

preted to mean all sorts of things. From that moment to this I've never seen the lawyer again. And what is worse, he never sent me the slightest explanation."

"How did you find out then what the artist had done?"

"Not through the artist, you can be sure. As soon as the lawyer stopped coming to see me, I suddenly felt that I never wanted to

see the artist again. That's the way women are. I was just fooling with the artist because I thought the lawyer was really in love with me, but when the lawyer stopped his attentions, I almost hated the other man."

"What can I do to help you?" I asked, feeling sorry for her, in her light-headed bewilderment.

"Just don't think ill of me for what I have told you," she pleaded. "It's done me so much good to speak to another woman. I confess it's

humiliating, but I feel, now that I have confessed, as though I could take a fresh start."

"How strange," I reflected, really astonished at her incoherence. "I can't understand at all how you happened to come to me."

"I came," she said, rising to leave, "I came because your husband asked me to."

She had got as far as the stairs, and was waving me good-by with her muff.

"But what has my husband got to do with it?" I cried.

"That he will tell you himself," she answered as she closed the outside door.



"My plucky darling!" Jack cried, taking me in his arms. "I little dreamed the ordeal you were going through. Until I saw your diary I never suspected what was in your mind"

The Third Person

March 26th.

WHEN Jack came home last night, I told him about *her* visit and what she had said. "Is it true?" I asked.

"Yes, darling."

"But what have you got to do with *her* love affairs?"

"In a strange way," he said, "I happened to be informed of them, though not through *her*. The lawyer she wanted, who wanted to marry her, is a man that I've known all my life."

"Luddington?" I said.

Jack nodded. "When he received that letter of hers—"

"But it was sent anonymously," I objected.

"Anonymously, yes, but there were a few printed lines with it, just enough to explain and insinuate. When Luddington received that letter, he was wild. He forwarded it to me. Poor fellow, he wanted me to say, 'go ahead,' and yet his heart fainted at the thought of marrying such a—well, such a flirt."

"Then, Jack," I said, looking at him in wonder, "the reason you happened to have that letter of hers was because Luddington had sent it to you?"

"Exactly."

"But," I sighed, "why couldn't you have told me this before?"

"Why, I was keeping another man's secret, dear."

"But just think how much suffering you would have saved me if you had told me."

"Darling," Jack murmured, kissing me, "I never dreamed that you were suffering. When I came back from the South you were so lovely to me; how could I know that there was anything weighing on your heart? On Sunday, just by chance, I happened to find out. I was standing in the window over by your desk. You had left your diary open. I couldn't help seeing it. I read a few lines. They were enough."

"So that's why you asked her to come and tell me?"

"Yes. As soon as I knew what was in your mind I wrote to her explaining everything—begging her to tell you herself."

"It must have been hard for her," I said.

"Especially as she didn't know until I told her, the real reason why Luddington had stopped seeing her."

"But she hated the artist instinctively. I should think she would prefer knowing the truth about him. You've really rendered her a service."

"At all events I kept her secret and his as long as I could."

"And I kept mine," I added, very seriously.

"My plucky darling!" Jack cried, taking me in his arms. "I little dreamed the ordeal you were going through. Until I saw your diary I never suspected what was in your mind."

"I've learned a lot," I said. "But what did you think when you saw that letter of hers in my little bag? You must have wondered."

"I supposed you had found poor Luddington's letter with that one, and that you were keeping his secret, too. As long as you said nothing I did not speak. In fact, I imagined the thing had gone completely out of your mind. And all the time you thought you were living with a culprit. I don't believe there's another woman in the world capable, under those circumstances, of keeping her mouth shut for six weeks. Do you?"

"I love you so," I whispered, the last doubt dead.

"Not one word of reproach since my return. Yes. That's love. Until it's stronger than doubt, love isn't real love. Yours is stronger."

For the first time in my married life I can say to-night that I am really happy, and that I really know it. It seems as though a barbed thorn had been taken from my heart.

Jack adores me. And I find that implicit faith keeps me very busy. Active consciousness is as absorbing as semi-hostile indifference. I believe some wives would be "out of a job" if they stopped suspecting their husbands. After all, though, it's in self-obliteration that a woman finds herself.

April 15th.

JACK and I have fixed it all up between *her* and Jim Luddington. I felt I couldn't do too much for *her*. She had taught me such a wonderful lesson. They are going to be married in June. I hope we'll see a lot of them. She is such a good reminder for me that a woman's troubles are mostly of the sort that never happen.

The Price She Paid

THE STORY OF A WOMAN'S STRUGGLE FOR AND AGAINST LOVE

By David Graham Phillips

Author of "The Hungry Heart," "The Husband's Story," "The Grain of Dust," etc.

Illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy

SYNOPSIS: Mildred Gower is the only daughter of an apparently rich man who died before he expected to and left his wife and daughter less than they had been used to spending in a year. When the family take stock of their resources they are appalled, and the decision is made for Mildred that, to reduce the drain upon their small amount of cash, she must marry. Instead, her mother, who continues to act rich, marries—a fortune-hunter who, fortunately, has a small but sure income. Angered by the way he has fooled himself, Presbury makes life miserable for the two women, especially Mildred, whom he declares he will not support. He insists that she get out and support herself, but she, brought up in luxury, can scarcely even dress herself. Her soul is filled with terror as she realizes that, in the matter of earning bread, there is only a step between herself and the women who ply an unnamable calling. Then the situation is saved by Presbury, who announces that he has met in town an old acquaintance, now a millionaire, who invited the family to Thanksgiving dinner. When he announces also that the man is looking for a wife his intention is apparent—he expects Mildred to become a candidate, which she does. Presbury paints a most undesirable picture of General William Siddall, but Mildred declares she will marry him if she can. At the dinner, which is richly offensive, in his blatantly offensive mansion, the general's attitude toward Mildred is that of the connoisseur toward an art object, and she exhibits her charms as unfeeling as he appraises them, while the mother fawns upon him. He lets it be known that he is willing to go on "if the goods are up to the sample." The weeks that he is investigating the history of the "goods" are made miserable to Mildred by bickerings at home, Presbury continually girding at her, so that even after the general at a second dinner has announced his readiness to "go on" she flares up and declares that unless he quits insulting her and the general she will give up and sell herself in the fashion not approved by society. Thereafter all goes smoothly, and the excitement of getting ready to marry a lavish lover carries her up to and through a magnificently gorgeous wedding.

III

THE intoxication of that wedding held long enough and strongly enough to soften and blunt the disillusionments of the first few days of the honeymoon. In the prospect that period had seemed, even to Mildred's rather unsophisticated imagination, appalling beyond her power to endure. In the fact—thanks in large part to that intoxication—it was certainly not unendurable. A human being, even an innocent young girl, can usually bear up under any experience to which a human being can be subjected. The general in pajamas—of the finest silk and of pigeon's-egg blue with a vast gorgeous monogram on the pocket—was more grotesque rather than more repellent than the general in morning or evening attire. Also he—that is, his expert staff of providers of luxury—had arranged for the bride a series of the most ravishing sensations in whisking her, like the heroine of an Arabian Nights' tale, from straitened circumstances to the very paradise of luxury.

The general's ideas on the subject of woman were old fashioned of the hard-shell variety. Woman was made for lux-

ury, and luxury was made for woman. His woman must be the most divinely easeful of the luxurious. At all times she must be fit and ready for any and every sybaritic idea that might enter her husband's head—and other purpose she had none. When she was not directly engaged in ministering to his joy she must be busy preparing herself for his next call upon her. A woman was a luxury, was the luxury of luxuries, must have and must use to their uttermost all capacities for gratifying his senses and his vanity. Alone with him, she must make him constantly feel how rich and rare and expensive a prize he had captured. When others were about, she must be constantly making them envy and admire him for having exclusive rights in such wonderful preserves. All this with an inflexible devotion to the loftiest ideals of chastity.

Before the intoxication of the wedding had worn away it was reinforced by the intoxication of the honeymoon—not an intoxication of love's providing, but one exceeding potent in its influence upon our weak human brains and hearts, one from which the strongest of us, instead of sneering at poor Mildred, would better be praying to be delivered.



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

The general stood with his hand upon the door-knob. The mask had dropped; the man, the monster, message to-day," said she, and her steady voice astonished her. "So I am going back home. . . .

looked a
I don't f



looked at her. "What's the matter?" said he in an ominously quiet voice. "Mr. Harding delivered your I don't know what I'm going to do, or how I'm going to do it. But it's all over between us"

The Price She Paid

At her marriage she had a few hundred dollars left of her patrimony—three hundred and fifty and odd, to be more exact. She spent a little money of her own here and there—in tips, in buying presents for her mother, in picking up trifles for her own toilet. The day came when she looked in her purse and found two one-franc pieces, a fifty-franc note, and a few coppers. And suddenly she sat back and stared, her mouth open like her almost empty gold bag, which the general had bought her on their first day in the Rue de la Paix. About ten dollars in all the world, and the general had forgotten to speak—or to make any arrangement, at least any arrangement of which she was aware—about a further supply of money.

They had been married nearly a month. He knew that she was poor. Why hadn't he said something or, better still, *done* something? Doubtless he had simply forgotten. But since he had forgotten for a month, might he not continue to forget? True, he had himself been poor at one time in his life, very poor, and that for a long time. But it had been so many years ago that he had probably lost all sense of the meaning of poverty. She frowned at this evidence of his lack of the finer sensibilities—by no means the first time that lack had been disagreeably thrust upon her. Soon she would be without money—and she must have money—not much, as all the serious expenses were looked after by the general, but still a little money. How could she get it? How could she remind him of his neglect without seeming to be indelicate? It was a difficult problem. She worked at it more and more continuously, and irritably, and nervously, as the days went by and her fifty-two francs dwindled to five.

She lay awake, planning long and elaborate conversations that would imperceptibly lead him up to where he must see what she needed without seeing that he had been led. She carried out these ingenious conversations. She led him along, he docilely and unsuspectingly following. She brought him up to where it seemed to her impossible for any human being endowed with the ordinary faculties to fail to see what was so plainly in view. All in vain. General William Siddall gazed placidly—and saw nothing.

Several days of these failures, and with her funds reduced to a fifty-centime piece and a two-sous copper she made a frontal

attack. When they went forth for the day's shopping she left her gold bag behind. After an hour or so she said:

"I've got to go to the Galleries Lafayette for some little things. I sha'n't ask you to sacrifice yourself. I know you hate those stuffy, smelly big shops."

"Very well," said he. "I'll use the time in a call on my bankers."

As they were about to separate, she taking the motor and he walking, she made a face of charming dismay and said: "How provoking! I've left my bag at the hotel."

Instead of the expected prompt offer of money he said, "It'll only take you a minute or so to drive there."

"But it's out of the way," she replied. "I'll need only a hundred francs or so."

Said he: "I've an account at the Bon Marché. Go there and have the things charged. It's much the best big shop in Paris."

"Very well," was all she could trust herself to say. She concealed her anger beneath a careless smile and drove away. How dense he was! Could anything be more exasperating—or more disagreeable? What *should* she do? The situation was intolerable; yet how could it be ended, except by a humiliating direct request for money? She wondered how young wives habitually dealt with this problem, when they happened to marry husbands so negligent, not to say underbred, as to cause them the awkwardness and the shame. There followed several days during which the money idea was an obsession, nagging and grinning at her every instant. The sight of money gave her a peculiar itching sensation. When the little general paid for anything—always drawing out a great sheaf of bank-notes in doing it—she flushed hot and cold, her glance fell guiltily and sought the money furtively. At last her desperation gave birth to an inspiration.

About her and the general, or, rather, about the general, revolved the usual rich man's small army of satellites of various degrees. The most conspicuous and most agreeable figure in this company was Harding, the general's factotum. Why not lay the case before Harding? He was notably sensible, and sympathetic—and discreet.

The following day she did so. Said she, blushing furiously: "Mr. Harding, I find myself in a very embarrassing position. I wonder if you can help me?"

Harding, a young man and of one of the best blond types, said, "No doubt I can—and I'll be glad to."

"The fact is"—Her voice was trembling with nervousness. She opened the gold bag, took out the little silver piece and the big copper piece, extended her pink palm with them upon it—"there's all I've got left of the money I brought with me."

Harding gazed at the exhibit tranquilly. He was chiefly remarkable for his perfect self-possession. Said he, "Do you wish me to cash a check for you?"

The stupidity of men! Tears of vexation gathered in her eyes. When she could speak she faltered, "No."

He was looking at her now—a grave, kind glance.

She somehow felt encouraged and heartened. She went on, "I was hoping—that—that the gen—that my husband had said something to you and that you perhaps had not thought to say anything to me."

Their glances met, his movingly sympathetic and understanding, hers piteously forlorn—the look of a lovely girl, stranded and friendless in a far strange land. Presently he said gently,

"Yes, he told me to say something to you—if you should speak to me about this matter." His tone caused in her heart a horrible stillness of suspense. He went on, "He said—I give you his exact words, 'If my wife should ask you for money, tell her my ideas on the subject.'"

A pause. She started up, crimson, her glance darting nervously this way and that to avoid his. "Never mind. Really, it's of no importance. Thank you—I'll get on very well. I'm sorry to have troubled you."

"Pardon me, Mrs. Siddall," he interposed, "but I think you'd best let me finish."

She started to protest, she tried to move toward the door. Her strength failed her, she sat down, waited, nervously clasping and unclasping the costly, jewel-embroidered bag.

"He has explained to me, many times," continued Harding, "that he believes women do not understand the value of money and ought not to be trusted with it. He purposes to provide everything for you, every comfort and luxury—I am using his own language, Mrs. Siddall—and he has open accounts at the principal shops

in every city where you will go—New York, Washington, Chicago, Denver, Paris, London, Rome. He says you are at liberty to get practically anything you please at these shops, and he will pay the bills. He thus entirely spares you the necessity of ever spending any money. Should you see anything you wish at some shop where he has no account, you can have it sent collect, and I or my assistant, Mr. Drawl, will settle for it. All he asks is that you use discretion in this freedom. He says it would be extremely painful to him to have to withdraw it."

Harding had pronounced this long speech in a dry monotonous voice, like one reading mechanically from a dull book. As Mildred listened, her thoughts began to whirl about the central idea until she fell into a kind of stupor. When he finished she was staring vacantly at the bag in her lap—the bag she was holding open wide.

Harding continued: "He also instructed me to say something about his former—his experiences. The first Mrs. Siddall he married when he was very young and poor. As he grew rich, she became madly extravagant. And as they had started on a basis on which she had free access to his money he could not check her. The result, finally, was a succession of bitter quarrels, and they were about to divorce when she died. He made the second Mrs. Siddall an allowance, a liberal allowance. Her follies compelled him to withdraw it. She resorted to underhanded means to get money from him without his knowing it. He detected the fraud. After a series of disagreeable incidents she committed the indiscretion which caused him to divorce her. He says that these experiences have convinced him that—"

"The second Mrs. Siddall," interrupted Mildred, "is she still alive?"

Harding hesitated. "Yes," he said reluctantly.

"Is she—poor?" asked Mildred.

"I should prefer not to—"

"Did the general forbid you to tell me?"

"On the contrary, he instructed me—But I'd rather not talk about it, Mrs. Siddall."

"Is she poor?" repeated Mildred.

"Yes."

"What became of her?"

A long pause. Then Harding said: "She was a poor girl when the general married

her. After the divorce she lived for a while with the man. But he had nothing. They separated. She tried various kinds of work—and other things. Since she lost her looks— She writes from time to time, asking for money.”

“Which she never gets?” said Mildred.

“Which she never gets,” said Harding. “Lately she was cashier or head waitress in a cheap restaurant in St. Louis.”

After a long silence Mildred said: “I understand. I understand.” She drew a long breath. “I shall understand better as time goes on, but I understand fairly well now.”

“I need not tell you, Mrs. Siddall,” said Harding in his gentle, tranquil way, “that the general is the kindest and most generous of men, but he has his own methods—as who has not?”

Mildred had forgotten that he was there—not a difficult matter, when he had in its perfection the secretarial manner of complete self-effacement. Said she reflectively, like one puzzling out a difficult problem:

“He buys a woman, as he buys a dog or a horse. He does not give his dog, his horse, pocket-money. Why should he give his woman pocket-money?”

“Will it help matters, Mrs. Siddall, to go to the other extreme and do him a grave injustice?”

She did not hear. At the picture presented to her mind by her own thoughts she gave a short satirical laugh. “How stupid of me not to have understood from the outset,” said she. “Why, I’ve often heard of this very thing.”

“It is more and more the custom among men of large property, I believe,” said Harding. “Perhaps, Mrs. Siddall, you would not blame them if you were in their position. The rich men who are careless—they ruin everybody about them, I assure you. I’ve seen it again and again.”

But the young wife was absorbed in her own thoughts. Harding, feeling her mood, did not interrupt. After a while she said:

“I must ask you some questions. These jewels the general has been buying—”

Harding made a movement of embarrassment and protest. She smiled ironically and went on:

“One moment, please. Every time I wish to wear any of them I have to go to him to get them. He asks me to return them when I am undressing. He says it is

safer to keep everything in his strong-box. I have been assuming that that was the only reason. I begin to suspect— Am I right, Mr. Harding?”

“Really I can’t say, Mrs. Siddall,” said Harding. “These are not matters to discuss with me, if you will permit me to say so.”

“Oh, yes, they are,” replied she laughingly. “Aren’t we all in the same boat?—all employees of the general?”

Harding made no reply.

Mildred was beside herself with a kind of rage that, because outlet was necessary and because raving against the general would be absolutely futile, found outlet in self-mockery and reckless sarcasm. “I understand about the jewels, too,” she went on. “They are not mine. Nothing is mine. Everything, including myself, belongs to him. If I give satisfaction in the position for which I’ve been hired for my board and clothes, I may continue to eat the general’s food and sleep in the general’s house and wear the general’s jewels and dresses and ride in the general’s traps and be waited on by the general’s servants. If I don’t like my place or he doesn’t like my way of filling it”—she laughed merrily, mockingly—“out I go—into the streets—after the second Mrs. Siddall. And the general will hire a new—” She paused, cast about for a word in vain, appealed to the secretary. “What would you call it, Mr. Harding?”

Harding rose, looking at her with a very soothing tranquillity. “If I were you, Mrs. Siddall,” said he, “I should get into the auto and go for a long drive—out to the Bois—out to Versailles—a long, long drive. I should be gone four or five hours at least, and I should look at the thing from all sides. Especially, I’d look at it from *his* standpoint.”

Mildred, somewhat quieter, but still mocking, said: “If I should decide to quit, would my expenses be paid back to where I was engaged? I fancy not.”

Harding looked grave. “If you had had money enough to pay your own expenses about, would you have married him?” said he. “Isn’t he paying—paying liberally, Mrs. Siddall—for *all* he gets?”

Mildred, stung, drew herself up haughtily, gave him a look that reminded him who she was and who he was. But Harding was not impressed.



When Mildred awoke after what she thought was a few minutes of unconsciousness, the clamor of traffic in the Rue de Rivoli startled her. She started up, glanced at the clock on the chimneypiece. It was ten minutes past nine!

"You said a moment ago—truly—that we are all in the same boat," observed he. "I put those questions to you because I honestly wish to help you—because I wish you not to act foolishly, hastily."

"Thank you, Mr. Harding," said Mildred coldly. And with a slight nod she went, angry and ashamed that she had so unaccountably opened up her secret soul, bared its ugly wounds, before a man she knew so slightly, a man in a position but one remove from menial. However, she took his advice—not as to trying to view the matter from all sides, for she was convinced that there was only the one side, but as to calming herself by a long drive alone in the woods and along quiet roads. When she returned she was under control once more.

She found the general impatiently awaiting her. Many packages had come—from the jewelers, from the furriers, from a shop whose specialty was the thinnest and most delicate of hand-made underwear. The general loved to open and inspect finery for her—loved it more than he loved inspecting finery for himself, because feminine finery was far more attractive than masculine. To whet his pleasure to the keenest she must be there to admire with him, to try on, to exhibit. As she entered the salon where the general was fussing about among the packages, their glances met. She saw that Harding had told him—at least in discreet outline—of their conversation. She also saw that if she reopened the subject she would find herself straightway whirled out upon a stormy sea of danger that might easily overwhelm her flimsy boat. She silently and sullenly dropped into her place: she ministered to the general's pleasure in packages of finery. But she did not exclaim, or admire, or respond in any way. The honeymoon was over. Her dream of wifehood was dissipated.

She understood now the look she so often had seen on the faces of rich men's poor wives driving in state in Fifth Avenue. That night, as she inspected herself in the glass while the general's maid for her brushed her long thick hair, she saw the beginnings of that look in her own face. "I don't know just what I am," she said to herself. "But I do know what I am not. I am not a wife."

She sent away the maid, and sat there in the dressing-room before the mirror,

waiting, her glance traveling about and noting the profuse and prodigal luxury. In the corner stood a circular rack loaded with dressing-gowns—more than a score of exquisite combinations of silk and lace or silk and chiffon. It so happened that there was nowhere in sight a single article of her apparel or for her toilet that was not bought with the general's money. No, there were some hair-pins that she had paid for herself, and a comb with widely separated teeth that she had chanced to see in a window when she was alone one day. Anything else? Yes, a two-franc box of pins. And that was all. Everything else belonged to the general. In the closets, in the trunks—all the general's, part of the trousseau he had paid for. Not an undergarment; not an outer garment; not a hat or a pair of shoes, not a wrap, not a pair of gloves. All the general's.

He was in the door of the dressing-room—the wiry figure cased in rose-silk pajamas. The mustache and imperial were carefully waxed as always, day and night. On the feet were high-heeled slippers. On the head was a rose-silk Neapolitan nightcap with gay tassel. The nightcap hid the bald spot from which the lofty toupee had been removed. A grotesque-enough figure, but not grotesque to her. Through the mask of the vain, boastful face she saw the general watching her, as she had seen him that afternoon when she came in—the mysterious and terrible personality that had made the vast fortune, that had ridden ruthlessly over friend and foe, over man and woman and child—to the goal of its desires.

"It's late, my dear," said the general. "Come to bed."

She rose to obey—she in the general's purchases of filmy nightgown under a pale-pink silk dressing-gown. He smiled with that curious noiseless mumbling and smacking of the thin lips. She sat down again.

"Don't keep me waiting. It's chilly," he said.

"I shall sleep in here to-night—on the couch," said she. She was trembling with fright at her own audacity. She could see a fifty-centime piece and a copper dancing before her eyes. She felt horribly alone and weak, but she had no desire to retract the words with which she had thrown down the gauntlet.

The general stood with his hand upon the door-knob. The mask had dropped; the

man, the monster, looked at her. "What's the matter?" said he in an ominously quiet voice.

"Mr. Harding delivered your message to-day," said she, and her steady voice astonished her. "So I am going back home."

He waited, looking steadily at her.

"After he told me and I thought about it, I decided to submit, but just now I saw that I couldn't. I don't know what possesses me. I don't know what I'm going to do, or how I'm going to do it. But it's all over between us." She said this rapidly, fluently, in a decisive way, quite foreign to her character as she had thought it.

"You are coming to bed, where you belong," said he quietly.

"No," replied she, pressing herself against her chair as if force were being used to drag her from it. She cast about for something that would make yielding impossible. "You are—repulsive to me."

He looked at her without change of countenance. Said he: "Come to bed. I ask you for the last time."

There was no anger in his voice, no menace either open or covert; simply finality—the last word of the man who had made himself feared and secure in the mining-camps where the equation of personal courage is straightway applied to every situation. Mildred shivered. She longed to yield, to stammer out some excuse and obey him. But she could not; nor was she able to rise from her chair. She saw in his hard eyes a look of astonishment, of curiosity as to this unaccountable defiance in one who had seemed docile, who had apparently no alternative but obedience. He was not so astonished at her as she was at herself. "What is to become of me?" her terror-stricken soul was crying. "I must do as he says—I must—yet I cannot!" And she looked at him and sat motionless.

He turned away, moved slowly toward the door, halted at the threshold to give her time, was gone. A fit of trembling seized her; she leaned forward and rested her arms upon the dressing-table or she would have fallen from the chair to the floor. Yet, even as her fear made her sick and weak, she knew that she would not yield.

The cold drove her to the couch, to lie under half a dozen of the dressing-gowns and presently to fall into a sleep of exhaustion. When she awoke after what she

thought was a few minutes of unconsciousness, the clamor of traffic in the Rue de Rivoli startled her. She started up, glanced at the clock on the chimneypiece. It was ten minutes past nine! When, by all the rules governing the action of the nerves, she ought to have passed a wakeful night she had overslept more than an hour. Indeed, she had had the first sound and prolonged sleep that had come to her since the honeymoon began; for until then she had slept alone all her life and the new order had almost given her chronic insomnia. She rang for her maid and began to dress. The maid did not come. She rang again and again; apparently the bell was broken. She finished dressing and went out into the huge, grandly and gaudily furnished salon. Harding was at a carved old-gold and lacquer desk, writing. As she entered he rose and bowed.

"Won't you please call one of the servants?" said she. "I want my coffee. I guess the bell in my room is broken. My maid doesn't answer."

"No, the bell is not broken," said Harding.

She looked at him questioningly.

"The general has issued an order that nothing is to be done in this apartment, and nothing served, unless he personally authorizes it."

Mildred paled, drew herself up in what seemed a gesture of haughtiness, but was an effort to muster her strength. To save herself from the humiliation of a breakdown before him, she hastily retreated by the way she had come. After perhaps a quarter of an hour she reappeared in the salon; she was now dressed for the street. Harding looked up from his writing, rose, and bowed gravely. Said she:

"I am going out for a walk. I'll be back in an hour or so."

"One moment," said Harding, halting her as she was opening the door into the public hall. "The general has issued an order that if you go out, you are not to be allowed to return."

With flashing eyes she cried, "But that is impossible!"

"It is his orders," said Harding, in his usual quiet manner, "and as he pays the bills he will be obeyed."

She debated. Against her will, her trembling hand sought the knob again. Against her will, her weak arm began to

draw the door open. Harding looked directly into her eyes. His eyes had dread and entreaty in them, but his voice was as always when he said,

"You know him, Mrs. Siddall."

"Yes," she said.

"The reason he has got all he wanted—whatever he wanted—is that he will go to *any* length. Every other human being, almost, has a limit, beyond which they will not go—a physical fear or a moral fear or a fear of public opinion. But the general—he has no limit."

"Yes," she said. And deathly pale and almost staggering she drew open the door and went out into the public hall.

"For God's sake, Mrs. Siddall!" cried Harding, in great agitation. "Come in quickly. They are watching—they will tell him! Are you mad?"

"I think I must be," said she. "I am sick with fear. I can hardly keep from dropping down here in a faint. Yet"—a strange look, a mingling of abject terror and passionate defiance, gave her an aspect quite insane—"I am going. Perhaps I, too, have no limit."

And she went along the corridor, past a group of gaping and frightened servants, down the stairway and out by the private entrance for the grand apartments of the hotel in the Rue Raymond de l'Isle. She crossed the Rue de Rivoli and entered the Tuileries Gardens. It was only bracingly cool in the sunshine of that winter day. She seated herself on a chair on the terrace to regain her ebbing strength. Hardly had she sat down when the woman collector came and stood waiting for the two sous for the chair. Mildred opened her bag, found two coins. She gave the copper one to the woman. The other—all the money she had—was the fifty-centime piece.

"But the bag—I can get a good deal for that," she said aloud.

"I beg your pardon—I didn't catch that."

She came back to a sense of her surroundings. Stanley Baird was standing a few feet away, smiling down at her. He was, if possible, even more attractively dressed than in the days when he hovered about her, hoping vague things of which he was ashamed and trying to get the courage to put down his snobbishness and marry her because she so exactly suited him. He was wearing a new kind of collar and tie,

striking yet in excellent quiet taste. Also, his face and figure had filled out just enough—he had been too thin in the former days. But he was now entered upon that period of the fearsome forties when, unless a man amounts to something, he begins to look insignificant. He did not amount to anything; he was therefore paling and waning as a personality.

"Was I thinking aloud?" said Mildred, as she gave him her hand.

"You said something about 'getting a good deal.'" He inspected her with the freedom of an old friend and also with the thoroughness of a connoisseur. "You're looking fine," declared he. "It must be a pleasure to them up in the Rue de la Paix to dress you. That's more than can be said for nine out of ten of the women who go there. Yes, you're looking fine—and in grand health, too. Why, you look younger than I ever saw you. Nothing like marriage to freshen a girl up. Well, I suppose waiting round for a husband who may or may not turn up does wear a woman down."

"It almost killed me," laughed Mildred. "And you were largely responsible."

"I?" said Baird. "You didn't want me. I was too old for you."

"No, I didn't want you," said Mildred. "But you spoiled me. I couldn't endure the boys of my own age."

Stanley was remembering that Mildred had married a man much older than he. With some notion of a careless sort of tact in mind he said, "I was betwixt and between—neither young enough nor old enough."

"You've married, too, since we met. By the way, thank you again for that charming remembrance. You always did have such good taste. But why didn't you come to the wedding—you and your wife?"

He laughed. "We were busy busting up," said he. "You hadn't heard? It's been in the papers. She's gone back to her people. Oh, nothing disgraceful on either side. Simply that we bored each other to death. She was crazy about horses and dogs, and that set. I think the stable's the place for horses—don't care to have 'em parading through the house all the time, every room, every meal, sleeping and waking. And dogs—the infernal brutes always have fleas. Fleas only tickled her, but they bite me—raise welts and hills. There's your husband now, isn't it?"



Howard Chandler Christy

DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

"One moment," said Harding, halting her as she was opening the door into the public hall. "The general has issued an order that if you go out, you are not to be allowed to return"

Baird was looking up at the windows of the Continental, across the street. Mildred's glance slowly and carelessly followed his. At one window stood the general, gazing abstractedly out over the gardens. At another window Mildred saw Harding; at a third, her maid; at a fourth, Harding's assistant, Drawl; at a fifth, three servants of the retinue. Except the general, all were looking at her.

"You've married a very extraordinary man," said Baird, in a correct tone of admiration. "One of the ablest and most interesting men we've got, I think."

"So you are free again?" said Mildred, looking at him with a queer cold smile.

"Yes, and no," replied Stanley. "I hope to be entirely free. It's her move next. I'm expecting it every day. But I'm thoroughly respectable. Won't you and the general dine with me?"

"Thanks, but I'm sailing for home tomorrow or next day."

"That's interesting," said Baird, with enthusiasm. "So am I. What ship do you go on?"

"I don't know yet. I'm to decide this afternoon, after lunch." She laughed. "I'm sitting here waiting for some one to ask me to lunch. I've not had even coffee yet."

"Lunch with me!" cried Baird. "I'll go get the general—I know him slightly."

"I didn't say anything about the general," said Mildred.

Stanley smiled apologetically. "It wouldn't do for you to go about with me—not when my missus is looking for grounds for divorce."

"Why not?" said Mildred. "So's my husband."

"You busted up, too? Now, that's what I call jolly." And he cast a puzzled glance up at the abstracted general. "I say, Mildred, this is no place for either of us, is it?"

"I'd rather be where there's food," confessed she.

"You think it's a joke, but I assure you—Oh, you were joking—about your bust-up?"

"No, indeed," she assured him. "I walked out a while ago, and I couldn't go back if I would—and I don't think I would if I could."

"That's foolish. Better go back," advised he. He was preparing hastily to decamp from so perilous a neighborhood. "One marriage is about like another, once you get through the surface. I'm sure

you'll be better off than—back with your stepfather."

"I've no intention of going to his house," she declared.

"Oh, there's your brother. I forgot."

"So had I forgotten him. I'll not go there either. In fact, I've not thought where I'll go."

"You seem to have done mighty little thinking before you took a very serious step for a woman." He was uneasily eying the rigid, abstracted figure a story up across the way.

"Those things aren't a question of thinking," said she absently. "I never thought in my life—don't think I could if I tried. But when the time came I—I walked out." She came back to herself, laughed. "I don't understand why I'm telling you all this, especially as you're mad with fright and wild to get away. Well, good-by, Stanley."

He lifted his hat. "Good-by. We'll meet when we can do so without my getting a scandal on you." He walked a few paces, turned, and came back. "By the way, I'm sailing on the *Deutschland*. I thought you'd like to know—so that you and I wouldn't be any chance cross on the same boat."

"Thanks," said she dryly.

"What's the matter?" asked he, arrested, despite his anxiety to be gone, by the sad, scornful look in her eyes.

"Nothing. Why?"

"You had such a—such a queer look."

"Really? Good-by."

Mildred sat watching Stanley Baird's handsome, graceful figure, draped in the most artistically cut of long dark overcoats, until he disappeared in the crowd in the Rue de Castiglione. Then, without a glance up at the interested, not to say excited, windows of the general's splendid and spreading apartments, she strolled down the gardens toward the Place Concorde. In Paris the beautiful on a bright and brisk day it is all but impossible to despair when one still has left youth and health. Mildred was not happy—far from it. The future, the immediate future, pressed its terrors upon her. But in mitigation there was, perhaps born of youth and inexperience, a giddy sense of relief. She had not realized how abhorrent the general was—married life with the general. She had been resigning herself to it, accepting it as the only thing possible, keeping it heavily draped with her

vanities of wealth and luxury—until she discovered that the wealth and the luxury were in reality no more hers than they were her maid's. And now she was free!

That word free did not have its full meaning for her. She had never known what real freedom was; women of the comfortable class—and men, too, for that matter—usually are born into the petty slavery of conventions at least, and know nothing else their whole lives through—never know the joy of the thought and the act of a free mind and a free heart. Still, she was released from a bondage that seemed slavish even to her, and the release gave her a sensation akin to the joy of freedom. A heavy hand that was crushing her very soul had been lifted off—no, *flung* off, and by herself. That thought, terrifying though it was, also gave her a certain new and exalting self-respect. After all, she was not a worm. She must have somewhere in her the germs of something less contemptible than the essential character of so many of the eminently respectable women she knew. She could picture them in the situation in which she had found herself. What would they have done? Why, what every instinct of her education impelled her to do; what some latent love of freedom, some unsuspected courage of self-respect, had forbidden her to do, had withheld her from doing.

Her thoughts and the gorgeous sunshine and her youth and health put her in a steadily less cheerless mood as by a roundabout way she sought the shop of the jeweler who had sold the general the gold bag she selected. The proprietor himself was in the front part of the shop and received "Madame la Générale" with all the honors of her husband's wealth. She brought no experience and no natural trading talent to the enterprise she was about to undertake; so she went directly to the main point.

"This bag," said she, laying it upon the glass between them, "I bought it here a short time ago."

"I remember perfectly, madame. It is the handsomest, the most artistic, we have sold this year."

"I wish to sell it back to you," said she.

"You wish to get something else and include it as part payment, madame?"

"No, I wish to get the money for it."

"Ah, but that is difficult. We do not often make those arrangements. Second-hand articles—"

"But the bag is quite new. Anyhow, it must have some value. Of course I'd not expect the full price."

The jeweler smiled. "The full price? Ah, madame, we should not think of offering it again as it is. We should—"

"No matter," interrupted Mildred. The man's expression—the normally pleasant and agreeable countenance turned repulsive by craft and lying—made her eager to be gone. "What is the most you will give me?"

"I shall have to consider—"

"I've only a few minutes. Please do not irritate me."

The man was studying her countenance with a desperate look. *Why* was she, the bride of the monstrously rich American, why was she trying to sell the bag? Did it mean the end of her resources? Or were there still huge orders to be got from her? His shrewdness, trained by thirty years of dealing with all kinds of luxurious human beings, went exploring in vain. He was alarmed by her frown. He began hesitatingly:

"The jewels and the gold are only a small part of the value. The chief value is the unique design, so elegant yet so simple. For the jewels and the gold, perhaps two thousand francs—"

"The purse was twelve thousand francs," interrupted she.

"Perfectly, madame. But—"

"I am in great haste. How much will you give me?"

"The most would be four thousand, I fear. I shall count up more carefully, if madame will—"

"No, four thousand will do."

"I will send the money to madame at her hotel. The Continental, is it not?"

"No, I must have it at once."

The jeweler hesitated. Mildred, flushing scarlet with shame—but he luckily thought it anger—took up the bag and moved toward the door.

"Pardon, madame, but certainly. Do you wish some gold or all notes?"

"Notes," answered she. "Fifty and hundred-franc notes."

A moment later she was in the street with the notes in a small bundle in the bosom of her wrap. She went hurriedly up the street. As she was about to turn the corner into the boulevard she on impulse glanced back. An automobile had just drawn up at the jeweler's door and Gen-

eral Siddall—top-hat, sable-lined overcoat, waxed mustache and imperial, high-heeled boots, gold-mounted cane—was descending. And she knew that he had awakened to his one oversight, and was on his way to repair it. But she did not know that the jeweler—old and wise in human ways—would hastily vanish with the bag and that an assistant would come forward with assurances that madame had not been in the shop and that, if she should come in, no business would be negotiated without the general's express consent. She all but fainted at the narrowness of her escape, and fled round into the boulevard. She entered a taxi and told the man to drive to Foyot's restaurant on the left bank—where the general would never think of looking for her.

When she had breakfasted she strolled in the Luxembourg Gardens, in even better humor with herself and with the world. There was still that horrid-faced future, but it was not leering into her very face. It was nearly four thousand francs away—"and if I hadn't been so stupid, I'd have got eight thousand, I'm sure," she said. But she was rather proud of a stupidity about money matters. And four thousand francs, eight hundred dollars—that was quite a good sum.

She had an instinct that the general would do something disagreeable about the French and English ports of departure for America. But perhaps he would not think of the Italian ports. That night she set out for Genoa, and three days later, in a different dress and with her hair done as she never wore it, sailed as Miss Mary Stevens on a German Mediterranean boat.

She had taken the whole of a cabin on the quieter deck below the promenade, paying for it nearly half of what was left of the four thousand francs. The first three days she kept to her cabin except at the dinner-hour, when she ventured to the deck just outside and walked up and down for exercise. Then followed four days of nasty weather during which she did not leave her bed. As the sea calmed she, wretched and reckless, had a chair put for herself under her window and sat there, veiled and swathed and turning her face away whenever a rare wandering passenger happened to pass along. Toward noon a man paused before her to light a cigarette. She, forgetting for the moment her precautions,

looked at him. It chanced that he looked at her at exactly the same instant. Their glances met. He started nervously, moved on a few steps, returned. Said she mockingly,

"You know you needn't speak if you don't want to, Stanley."

"There isn't a soul on board that anybody ever knew or that ever knew anybody," said he. "So why not?"

"And you look horribly bored."

"Unspeakably," replied Baird. "I've spoken to no one since I left Paris."

"What are you doing on this ship?" inquired she.

"To be perfectly honest," said he, "I came this way to avoid you. I was afraid you'd take passage on my steamer just to amuse yourself with my nervousness. And—here you are!"

"Amusing myself with your nervousness."

"But I'm not nervous. There's no danger. Will you let me have a chair put beside yours?"

"It will be a charity on your part," said she.

When he was comfortably settled, he explained his uneasiness. "I see I've got to tell you," said he; for I don't want you to think me a shouting ass. The fact is my wife wants to get a divorce from me and to soak me for big alimony. She's a woman who'll do anything to gain her end, and—well, for some reason she's always been jealous of you. I didn't care to get into trouble, or to get you into trouble."

"I'm traveling as Mary Stevens," said Mildred. "No one knows I'm aboard."

"Oh, I'm sure we're quite safe. We can enjoy the rest of this voyage."

Which they proceeded to do in the necessarily limited way imposed by the littleness of their present world and the meagerness of the resources. As neither had the kind of mind that expands in abstractions, they were soon talking in the most intimate and personal way about themselves—were confessing things which neither would have breathed to anyone on land. It was the man who set the example of breaking through the barriers of conventional restraint—perhaps of delicacy, though it must be said that human beings are rarely so fine in their reticences as the theory of refinement would have us believe. Said Stanley, after the preliminaries of partial confidence and halt-



"I'm not sure I would take alimony if I could get it," said Mildred. Then she laughed. "What's the use of being a hypocrite with oneself? I know I would. All I could get"

ing avowal that could not be omitted, even at sea, by a man of "gentlemanly instinct":

"I don't know why I shouldn't own up. I know you'll never tell anybody. Fact is, I and my wife were never in love with each other for a second. We married because we were in the same set and because our in-

comes together gave us enough to do the thing rather well." After a solemn pause.

"I was in love with another woman—one I couldn't marry. But I'll not go into that. At any rate, marrying whom I did was the mistake of my life. I'm determined that she sha'n't trip me up and trim me for any

alimony. And, as matters stand, she can't. She left me of her own accord."

"Then," said Mildred thoughtfully, "if the wife leaves of her own accord, she can't get alimony?"

"Certainly not—not a cent."

"I supposed so," said she. "I'm not sure I'd take it if I could get it. Still, I suppose I would." She laughed. "What's the use of being a hypocrite with oneself? I know I would. All I could get."

"Then you had no *legal* excuse for leaving?"

"No," said she. "I—just bolted. I don't know what's to become of me. I seem not to care, at present, but no doubt I shall as soon as we see land again."

"You'll go back to him?" said Stanley.

"No," replied she.

"Sure you will," rejoined he. "It's your living. What else can you do?"

"That's what I must find out. Surely there's something else for a woman besides such a married life as mine. I can't and won't go back to my husband. And I can't and won't go to the house at Hanging Rock."

"You mean that?"

"Absolutely. And I've got less than three hundred and fifty dollars in the world."

Baird was silent. He was roused from his abstraction by gradual consciousness of an ironical smile on the face of the girl, for she did not look like a married woman. "You are laughing at me. Why?" inquired he.

"I was reading your thoughts."

"You think you've frightened me?"

"Naturally. Isn't a confession such as I made enough to frighten a man? It sounded as though I were getting ready to ask alms."

"So it did," said he. "But I wasn't thinking of it in that way. You *will* be in a frightful fix pretty soon, won't you?"

"It looks that way. But you need not be uneasy."

"Oh, I want to help you. I'll do everything I can. I was trying to think of something you could make money at. I was thinking of the stage, but I suppose you'd balk at that. I'll admit it isn't the life for a lady. But the same thing's true of whatever money can be made at. If I were you, I'd go back."

"If I were myself, I'd go back," said Mildred. "But I'm not myself."

"You will be again, as soon as you face the situation. You could have everything a woman wants. Except, of course—per-

haps—But you never struck me as being especially sentimental."

"Sentiment has nothing to do with it," rejoined she. "Do you think I could get a place on the stage?"

"Oh, you'd have to study a while."

"But I can't afford that. If I could afford to study, I'd have my voice trained."

Baird's face lighted up with enthusiasm. "The very thing!" he cried. "You've got a voice, a grand-opera voice. I've heard lots of people say so, and it sounded that way to me. You must cultivate your voice."

Mildred laughed. "Don't talk nonsense. Even I know that's nonsense. The lessons alone would cost thousands of dollars. And how could I live for the four or five years?"

"You didn't let me finish," said Baird. "I was going to say that when you get to New York you must go and have your voice passed on—by some impartial person. If that person says it's worth cultivating, why, I'm willing to back you—as a business proposition. I can afford to take the risk. So, you see, it's all perfectly simple."

He had spoken rapidly, with a covert suggestion of fear lest she would rebuke him sharply for what she might regard as an impertinent offer. She surprised him by looking at him calmly, reflectively, and saying, "Yes, you could afford it, couldn't you?"

"I'm sure I could. And it's the sort of thing that's done every day. Of course, no one'd know that we had made this little business arrangement. But that's easily managed. I'd be glad if you'd let me do it, Mildred. I'd like to feel that I was of some use in the world. And I'd like to do something for *you*."

By way of exceedingly cautious experiment he ventured to put ever so slight an accent of tenderness upon the "you." He observed her furtively but nervously. He could not get a hint of what was in her mind. She gazed out toward the rising and falling horizon line. Presently she said,

"I'll think about it."

"You must let me do it, Mildred. It's the sensible thing—and you know me well enough to know that my friendship can be counted on."

"I'll think about it," was all she would concede, though she had made up her mind to accept his offer, without permitting herself to think of the complications involved in such curiously intimate relations with a man of his temperament, habits, and inclinations.

The next instalment of "*The Price She Paid*" will appear in the January issue.

The Girl Who "Made Good"



PHOTOGRAPH BY POLLSMAN & SANFELD, LTD.

Miss Lily Elsie at her country home, whither she goes whenever she can get a respite from her task of being the idol of the British metropolis

By Alan Dale

ONCE every ten years a new Girl arises in London, to hold sway over fashions in face, form, style, clothes, and manner. Exactly how she rises, or why she rises, or what would happen if she didn't rise are questions that I shall dismiss with airy insouciance. There is probably some psychological aspect to the question, but it is beyond me; I am no psychologist.

The Girl who has "got" London for the next decade is undoubtedly Miss Lily Elsie of Daly's Theater, and, like most of these girls, she "got" London suddenly, without any beating about the bush. There was no struggle; no sign of a con-

test; not a suspicion of fracas. Miss Lily Elsie simply *was*—at the close of the run of "The Merry Widow" at Daly's Theater.

I wondered if Miss Lily Elsie would receive me without any frills and furbelows, for naturally I pictured her as somewhat haughty, with her pensive penitence as a pose. I even imagined her asking me to luncheon, and appearing at the head of her own table in a lace *peignoir* and an eruption of diamonds. I have known it done in New York. I am bound to judge all these girls New-Yorkily. And I was a bit perplexed when it was borne in upon me that Miss Elsie would be delighted to

The Girl Who "Made Good"



Miss Elsie in style at the stile, a bit of rustic scenery near her home

see me in her dressing-room at Daly's Theater during the progress or at the close of "The Count of Luxembourg."

The lovely waltz strains of "The Count of Luxembourg" rose, swooned, and died. The curtain blotted out the picture from the audience. The piece was over. Miss Elsie was free, and I made my way across the rapidly demolishing scene with a sense of complete satisfaction. She had finished pretending to the audience; it was now her cue to pretend to me. You see, having met so many of these Girls, I am inclined to be cynical.

A large and lovely dressing-room, very unlike the cubby-

holes that do duty for such in New York, where all that's gold glitters for the public only, and not for the artist.

Miss Elsie's room was a veritable boudoir. She had thrown herself into a chair by the dressing-table, and in front of a looking-glass. Of course, a duenna. The duenna sat far away in her somber black.

Miss Elsie didn't look a bit tired as she rose to greet me. She has young, clear, pretty eyes that linger rather helplessly in yours. She suggests the clinging damsel of old-fashioned views. Nothing independent about this Girl. She met me without a suggestion of either surprise or embarrassment. She was as unassuming as though her position were still to be secured, and I felt at home with her at once—or as at home as one could feel with a sable-garbed duenna a few yards away.

"Yes, I suppose I have risen," she said diffidently, as I spoke to



PHOTOGRAPHS BY FOCUSHAM & HANFIELD, LTD.

Miss Elsie in street costume and in "The Waltz Dream," in which she "arrived" in London



PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLASS & HANFIELD, LTD.

"One of these days I hope to go to America. Strangely enough, we English girls always hope that. We never really feel that we have quite conquered until we have done some little turn in the United States"

The Girl Who "Made Good"

her the beautiful thought that I embodied in the opening paragraph. "I suppose so. It is a surprise to me. It was not as easy as you think, and the most difficult task is still ahead of me—to keep up the good work. That's the rub."

She looked at me to see how I was taking her. I did not credit her with undue intelligence. It would have been a pity to do so. The really pretty girl never looks intelligent.

Intelligence is useful, but not at all handsome. For the London musical-comedy girl, it is a perfectly unnecessary encumbrance. Miss Elsie struck me as having risen from the ranks—or probably having been pushed from the ranks. I should call her bright rather than intelligent. But of course she couldn't tell what I thought.

"Do you want to know the story of my horrible past?" she asked softly.

Between ourselves, and quite personally, I didn't. All these horrible pasts are very much the same. Yet successful girls like to prate about them. So let them prate. It is wonderful how success can gild a squalid past, until the squalor melts like snow in the sunshine. (Who shall say that I haven't a softer mood?)

"Well," she said, with evident relish, "I have been on the stage for years and years, and I was once known as Little Elsie. And I did sing at the music-halls, and alas! those music-halls were never the good ones."

"You sang at bad music-halls?"

Miss Elsie made a



PHOTOGRAPHS BY FOUILLAM & HANFIELD, LTD.

Three views of Lily Elsie, whose success is a London sensation

slight grimace, as though the recollection were unpleasant. "By bad music-halls, I mean those that didn't amount to anything," she said. "Perhaps I should say cheap music-halls."

I am afraid I didn't do very much good there, but I earned my living, and that was really all I wanted to do. I really wasn't an actress until I got an engagement in an American farce called 'McKenna's

Flirtations,' touring the provinces and for that my salary was two pounds ten a week.

I was in clover."

"McKenna's Flirtations"! Years ago I remembered it in New York. The mention of it awoke all sorts of dormant memories.

I couldn't picture this lovely London girl in that farrago of arrogant idiocy. Possibly if Miss Elsie had never succeeded, she would have refused to remember "McKenna's

Flirtations."

"Oh, I felt I was quite well-to-do with two pounds ten a week," she went on, looking with a certain pardonable—oh, perfectly pardonable—satisfaction at the ornate surroundings of the star dressing-room in Daly's Theater. "I don't fancy I could do very much with it to-day, but the cost of living has increased."

She smiled ingenuously. The limpid quality of her eyes did not change, as such a quality frequently does change in a smile. Miss Elsie has the unsophisticated look in its most admirable style. A bit too tall for the conventional *ingénue*, she has nevertheless every characteristic of that enviable type. "And now," she resumed languidly, "I come to George Edwardes. That is where all nice girls like to arrive, I assure you, Mr. Dale. I really was quite a hopeless proposition in 'McKenna's



PHOTOGRAPH BY FOULSHAM & SANFIELD, LTD.

A special pose by Miss Lily Elsie and Mr. Bertram Wallis, the principals in the great musical-comedy success, "The Count of Luxembourg," at Daly's Theater, London

Flirtations.' I had studied singing, of course, but they couldn't get me to work at dancing. My people tried hard to teach me dancing when I was a little girl. But, really, I was a very naughty little girl. Oh, I was very naughty."

The duenna sitting far away—not far enough to please me—chuckled. She was quite enjoying this chat, and I dare say she liked it better than "The Count of Luxembourg."

"And now you're not naughty? You're good?" (Sometimes I can be quite asinine, you know. You may have discovered this fact.)

"Now I'm good," she assented. "But to continue. I got an engagement in Mr. Edwardes' 'See-See' company. I forget whose part I played—somebody's of course. The point is that Mr. Edwardes himself saw me in this part, and it was the turning-point of my career. He saw me, and he made up his mind then and there that I should play the leading part in his forthcoming production of 'The Merry Widow.' As far as London is concerned, I date from 'The Merry Widow,' you know. Well, maybe I wasn't overjoyed! But the most horrible time of my life had begun."

She was getting dramatic. I sniffed "suspense" in the air. It wasn't necessary to ask a question. She was wound up, and I let her unwind.

"At rehearsal," she said, "my tribulations started. The rumor went around that I was never going to be allowed to play the part—oh, never. It was hinted that there was somebody else in view, and that I was just being used. Oh, I was so miserable. I really had the most odious time. Everybody looked at me askance. I was regarded as a sort of interloper—one of those nobodies who step on, and whom everybody snubs. Snubbed? I got it on all sides. The awful notion that I was never going to play the part haunted me by night and day. I don't think I did myself justice at rehearsals. How could I? I was so nervous and unstrung. But I must say one thing: George Edwardes stuck to me through thick and thin. I should have known that what he said went. But those dreadful rumors that percolate through a company unhinged me. But Mr. Edwardes had made up his mind. He had selected me as an absolute novice, for this important rôle, in

a highly advertised production, and I played the part. I got through it. I was splendidly received. But let me assure you of this, Mr. Dale, and you can believe it, I never realized that I had made a hit until 'The Merry Widow' had been running for six months."

She had proved herself sincere at last, and the last vanishing thread of my cynicism was routed. This was no pose. Miss Elsie was not acting. This was the real thing. It was a "heart to heart"—and that is what I like.

"And I was made," she went on, with a little gasp. "The knowledge came to me gradually. 'The Merry Widow,' you know, was a tremendous success, and I was of course persistently associated with it. All I did was to take a 'bus-man's holiday' occasionally."

"What's that?" I asked, delighted *not* to know something.

She laughed. "It's a dreadful thing that you, in New York, wouldn't tolerate. We take a night off occasionally, in London, you know, and give our understudies a chance. Oh! I know it's very wicked, but it's very nice. Sometimes a new play opens, and we have a wild yearning to see it. So we ask for a holiday, and spend the holiday seeing the other show. You know the London omnibus driver, when he takes a holiday, enjoys it by riding around on another omnibus. So we call it a 'busman's holiday' when we recuperate at another theater! Several times, during the run of 'The Merry Widow,' I asked for a few days off, and spent them at other playhouses.

"One of these days," she continued, as though she particularly wanted me to get this in, "I hope to go to America. Strangely enough, we English girls always hope that. No sooner have we got what we have been seeking for in London than we cast our eyes on New York. Every actor and actress in London has the New York fever at some time."

"Do you think a success in New York helps you in London?" I asked.

"Certainly I do," she said, "and not only with the management, but with the public. I am quite sure of it. I have seen it in so many cases. We never really feel that we have quite conquered until we have done some little turn in the United States. We all go there sooner or later, don't we?

"They made a sort of heroine out of me because I appeared in 'The Count of Luxembourg,'" she said presently. "I had just had a very severe operation, and my doctors all said that I should never be able to appear. Then there was that staircase dance to be executed, and that wasn't very easy for an invalid. It isn't easy under any circumstances. The day before the opening I was under the influence of morphin, and

"In London it's a sure thing," I said. "Yes," she agreed, "it is. We can take a house for a year and feel quite sure that we shall not have to disarrange our plans. That is a beautiful thing about success here. We can establish ourselves and rest comfortably."

The duenna coughed. It was not a cough that needed lozenges. It was the cough of a

it seemed a sure thing that I should not appear. Oh, how I willed! I made up my mind that I *would* play. I couldn't contemplate anything else. I really went on from a sick-bed, but everything turned out splendidly. How kind they are in London! How easy they make it for anybody who has once done anything. I was accepted in 'The Count of Luxembourg' as I was accepted in 'The Merry Widow,' and once again I am happy, and booked for a long, long run."

And yet Miss Elsie can sigh for New York, where tastes change like the weather, where—as Mr. Charles Frohman has put it—one is remembered for one's failures rather than for one's successes!



PHOTO BY FOULSHAM & BANFIELD, LTD.

"She has young, clear, pretty eyes that linger rather helplessly in yours"

Elsie *didn't* look tired. She should have, but she didn't. After all, in musical comedy, one doesn't "run the gamut" of the emotions!

But as the duenna advanced to unhook Miss Elsie, I felt it was my cue to go. I did wait until the first hook had succumbed, and I would have waited for the second, but—

One must observe the proprieties—hang 'em!

guardian who is beginning to get fractious. She had coughed once before, and I had disregarded it. This time it couldn't possibly escape my attention. Oh, how I hate duennas! They *are* better than mothers, but they are bad enough, goodness knows. It was midnight, and Miss



DRAWN BY WILL PORTER

Out in the river above the end of the heading, where a short time before there had been only a few bubbles on the surface of the water, I could see what looked like a huge geyser of water spouting up. I pulled Craig over to me and pointed. "A blow-out," cried Kennedy, as he rushed to the door

("The Sand-Hog")

The Sand-Hog

It doesn't much matter where Craig Kennedy, scientific detective, chooses to take you for a thrill while he is nabbing a criminal. He has brought his victims to earth from aeroplanes, "pinched" them in gambling-dens and in out-of-the-way shacks along the docks. It is the way he does it that counts—the way he mixes his keen, up-to-the-minute knowledge of the latest developments of science with wit and every-day "horse sense." And when the mixing process begins, a criminal drops. In this story he shows that there is more than one way to dig a tunnel and to win a maid

By Arthur B. Reeve

Author of "The Silent Bullet," "The Deadly Tube," "The Black Hand," "The Steel Door," etc.

Illustrated by Will Foster

"INTERESTING story, this fight between the Five-Borough and the Inter-River Transit," I remarked to Kennedy as I sketched out the draft of an exposé of high finance for the *Sunday Star*.

"Then that will interest you, also," said he, throwing a letter down on my desk. He had just come in and was looking over his mail.

The letterhead bore the name of the Five-Borough Company. It was from Jack Orton, one of our intimates at college, who was in charge of the construction of a new tunnel under the river. It was brief, as Jack's letters always were. "I have a case here at the tunnel that I am sure will appeal to you, my own case, too," it read. "You can go as far as you like with it, but get to the bottom of the thing, no matter whom it hits. There is some deviltry afoot, and apparently no one is safe. Don't say a word to anybody about it, but drop over to see me as soon as you possibly can."

"Yes," I agreed, "that does interest me. When are you going over?"

"Now," replied Kennedy, who had not taken off his hat. "Can you come along?"

As we sped across the city in a taxicab, Craig remarked: "I wonder what is the trouble? Did you see in the society news this morning the announcement of Jack's engagement to Vivian Taylor, the daughter of the president of the Five-Borough?"

I had seen it, but could not connect it with the trouble, whatever it was, at the tunnel, though I did try to connect the tunnel mystery with my exposé.

We pulled up at the construction works, and a strapping Irishman met us. "Is this Professor Kennedy?" he asked of Craig.

"It is. Where is Mr. Orton's office?"

"I'm afraid, sir, it will be a long time before Mr. Orton is in his office again, sir. The doctor have just took him out of the medical lock, an' he said if you was to come before they took him to the 'orspital I was to bring you right up to the lock."

"Good heavens, man, what has happened?" exclaimed Kennedy. "Take us up to him quick."

Without waiting to answer, the Irishman led the way up and across a rough board platform until at last we came to what looked like a huge steel cylinder, lying horizontally, in which was a floor with a cot and some strange paraphernalia. On the cot lay Jack Orton, drawn and contorted, so changed that even his own mother would scarcely have recognized him. A doctor was bending over him, massaging the joints of his legs and his side.

"Thank you, Doctor, I feel a little better," he groaned. "No, I don't want to go back into the lock again, not unless the pain gets worse."

His eyes were closed, but hearing us he opened them and nodded.

"Yes, Craig," he murmured with difficulty, "this is Jack Orton. What do you think of me? I'm a pretty sight. How are you? And how are you, Walter? Not too vigorous with the hand-shakes, fellows. Sorry you couldn't get over before this happened."

"What's the matter?" we asked, glancing blankly from Orton to the doctor.

Orton forced a half smile. "Just a touch of the 'bends' from working in compressed air."

The Sand-Hog

We looked at him, but could say nothing. I, at least, was thinking of his engagement.

"Yes," he added bitterly, "I know what you are thinking about, fellows. Look at me! Do you think such a wreck as I am now has any right to be engaged to the dearest girl in the world?"

"Mr. Orton," interposed the doctor, "I think you'll feel better if you'll keep quiet. You can see your friends in the hospital to-night, but for a few hours I think you had better rest. Gentlemen, if you will be so good as to postpone your conversation with Mr. Orton until later it would be much better."

"Then I'll see you to-night," said Orton to us feebly. Turning to a tall, spare, wiry chap, of just the build for tunnel work, where fat is fatal, he added: "This is Mr. Capps, my first assistant. He will show you the way down to the street again."

"Confound it!" exclaimed Craig, after we had left Capps. "What do you think of this? Even before we can get to him something has happened. The plot thickens before we are well into it. I think I'll not take a cab, or a car either. How are you for a walk until we can see Orton again?"

I could see that Craig was very much affected by the sudden accident that had happened to our friend, so I fell into his mood, and we walked block after block scarcely exchanging a word. His only remark, I recall was, "Walter, I can't think it was an accident, coming so close after that letter." As for me, I scarcely knew what to think.

At last our walk brought us around to the private hospital where Orton was. As we were about to enter, a very handsome girl was leaving. Evidently she had been visiting some one of whom she thought a great deal. Her long fur coat was flying carelessly, unfastened in the cold night air; her features were pale, and her eyes had the fixed look of one who saw nothing but grief.

"It's terrible, Miss Taylor," I heard the man with her say soothingly, "and you must know that I sympathize with you a great deal."

Looking up quickly, I caught sight of Capps and bowed. He returned our bows and handed her gently into an automobile that was waiting.

"He might at least have introduced us," muttered Kennedy, as we went on into the hospital.

Orton was lying in bed, white and worn, propped up by pillows which the nurse kept arranging and rearranging to ease his pain. The Irishman whom we had seen at the tunnel was standing deferentially near the foot of the bed.

"Quite a number of visitors, nurse, for a new patient," said Orton, as he welcomed us. "First Capps and Paddy from the tunnel, then Vivian"—he was fingering some beautiful roses in a vase on a table near him—"and now, you fellows. I sent her home with Capps. She oughtn't to be out alone at this hour, and Capps is a good fellow. She's known him a long time. No, Paddy, put down your hat. I want you to stay. Paddy, by the way, fellows, is my right-hand man in managing the 'sand-hogs' as we call the tunnel-workers. He has been a sand-hog on every tunnel job about the city since the first successful tunnel was completed. His real name is Flanagan, but we all know him best as Paddy."

Paddy nodded. "If I ever get over this and back to the tunnel," Orton went on, "Paddy will stick to me, and we will show Taylor, my prospective father-in-law and the president of the railroad company from which I took this contract, that I am not to blame for all the troubles we are having on the tunnel. Heaven knows that—"

"Oh, Mr. Orton, you ain't so bad," put in Paddy without the faintest touch of undue familiarity. "Look what I was when ye come to see me when I had the bends, sir."

"You old rascal," returned Orton, brightening up. "Craig, do you know how I found him? Crawling over the floor to the sink to pour the doctor's medicine down."

"Think I'd take that medicine," explained Paddy, hastily. "Not much. Don't I know that the only cure for the bends is bein' put back in the 'air' in the medical lock, same as they did with you, and bein' brought out slowly? That's the cure, that, an' grit, an' patience, an' time. Mark me wuds, gintlemen, he'll finish that tunnel an', beggin' yer pardon, Mr. Orton, marry that gurl, too. Didn't I see her with tears in her eyes right in this room when he wasn't lookin', and a smile when he was? Sure, ye'll be all right," continued Paddy, slapping his side and thigh. "We all get the bends more or less—all us sand-hogs. I was that doubled up meself that I felt like a big jack-knife. Had it in the arm, the side,

and the leg all at once, that time he was just speakin' of. He'll be all right in a couple more weeks, sure, an' down in the air again, too, with the rest of his men. It's some-thin' else he has on his moind."

"Then the case has nothing to do with your trouble, nothing to do with the bends?" asked Kennedy, keenly showing his anxiety to help our old friend.

"Well, it may and it may not," replied Orton thoughtfully. "I begin to think it has. We have had a great many cases of the bends among the men, and lots of the poor fellows have died, too. You know, of course, how the newspapers are roasting us. We are being called inhuman; they are going to investigate us; perhaps indict me. Oh, it's an awful mess; and now some one is trying to make Taylor believe it is my fault."

"Of course," he continued, "we are work-

ing under a high air-pressure just now, some days as high as forty pounds. You see, we have struck the very worst part of the job, a stretch of quicksand in the river-bed, and if we can get through this we'll strike pebbles and rock pretty soon, and then we'll be all right again."

He paused. Paddy quietly put in: "Begin' yer pardon again, Mr. Orton, but we had intirely too many cases of the bends even when we were wurkin' at low pressure, in the rock, before we sthruck this sand. There's somethin' wrong, sir, or ye wouldn't be here yerself like this. The bends don't sthrike the engineers, them as don't do the hard work, sir, and is careful, as ye know—not often."

"It's this way, Craig," resumed Orton. "When I took this contract for the Five-Borough Transit Company, they agreed to pay me liberally for it, with a big bonus if I finished ahead of time, and a big penalty if I exceeded the time. You may or may not know it, but there is some doubt about the validity of their franchise after a certain

date, provided the tunnel is not ready for operation.

Well, to make a long story short, you know there are rival companies that would like to see the work fail and the franchise revert to the city, or at least get tied up in the courts. I took it with the understanding that it was every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost."

"Have you yourself seen any evidences of rival influences hindering the work?" asked Kennedy.

Orton carefully weighed his reply. "To begin with," he answered at length, "while I was pushing the construction end, the Five-

Borough was working with the state legislature to get a bill extending the time-limit of the franchise another year. Of course, if it had gone through

it would have been fine for us. But some unseen influence blocked the company at every turn. It was subtle; it never came into the open. They played on public opinion as only demagogues of high finance can, very plausibly of course, but from the



"And then, when everything was going ahead fine, these confounded accidents"—Orton was leaning excitedly forward—"and lawsuits and delays and deaths began to happen"

most selfish and ulterior motives. The bill was defeated."

I nodded. I knew all about that part of it, for it was in the article I was writing for the *Star*.

"But I had not counted on the extra year, anyhow," continued Orton, "so I wasn't disappointed. My plans were laid for the shorter time from the start. I built an island in the river so that we could work from each shore to it, as well as from the island to each shore, really from four points at once. And then, when everything was going ahead fine, and we were actually doubling the speed in this way, these confounded accidents"—he was leaning excitedly forward—"and lawsuits and delays and deaths began to happen."

Orton sank back as a paroxysm of the bends seized him, following his excitement.

"I should like very much to go down into the tunnel," said Kennedy simply.

"No sooner said than done," replied Orton, almost cheerfully, at seeing Kennedy so interested. "We can arrange that easily. Paddy will be glad to do the honors of the place in my absence."

"Indade I will do that same, sor," responded the faithful Paddy, "an' it's a shmall return for all ye've done for me."

"Very well, then," agreed Kennedy. "To-morrow morning we shall be on hand. Jack, depend on us. We will do our level best to get you out of this scrape."

"I knew you would, Craig," he replied. "I've read of some of your and Walter's exploits. You're a pair of bricks, you are. Good-by, fellows," and his hands mechanically sought the vase of flowers which reminded him of their giver.

At home we sat for a long time in silence. "By George, Craig," I exclaimed at length, my mind reverting through the whirl of events to the glimpse of pain I had caught on the delicate face of the girl leaving the hospital, "Vivian Taylor is a beauty, though, isn't she?"

"And Capps thinks so, too," he returned, sinking again into his shell of silence. Then he suddenly rose and put on his hat and coat. I could see the old restless fever for work which came into his eyes whenever he had a case which interested him more than usual. I knew there would be no rest for Kennedy until he had finished it. Moreover, I knew it was useless for me to remonstrate with him, so I kept silent.

"Don't wait up for me," he said. "I don't know when I'll be back. I'm going to the laboratory and the university library. Be ready early in the morning to delve into this tunnel mystery."

I awoke to find Kennedy dozing in a chair, partly dressed, but just as fresh as I was after my sleep. I think he had been dreaming out his course of action. At any rate, breakfast was a mere incident in his scheme, and we were over at the tunnel works when the night shift were going off.

Kennedy carried with him a moderate-sized box of the contents of which he seemed very careful. Paddy was waiting for us, and, after a hasty whispered conversation, Craig stowed the box away behind the switchboard of the telephone central, after attaching it to the various wires. Paddy stood guard while this was going on so that no one would know about it, not even the telephone girl, whom he sent off on an errand.

Our first inspection was of that part of the works which was above ground. Paddy, who conducted us, introduced us first to the engineer in charge of this part of the work, a man named Shelton, who had knocked about the world a great deal, but had acquired a taciturnity that was Sphinx-like. If it had not been for Paddy, I fear we should have seen very little, for Shelton was not only secretive, but his explanations were such that even the editor of a technical journal would have had to blue pencil them considerably. However, we gained a pretty good idea of the tunnel works above ground—at least Kennedy did. He seemed very much interested in how the air was conveyed below ground, the tank for storing compressed air for emergencies and other features. It quite won Paddy, although Shelton seemed to resent his interest even more than he despised my ignorance.

Next Paddy conducted us to the dressing-rooms. There we put on old clothes and oilskins, and the tunnel doctor examined us and extracted a written statement that we went down at our own risk and released the company from all liability—much to the disgust of Paddy.

"We're ready now, Mr. Capps," called Paddy, opening an office door on the way out.

"Very well, Flanagan," answered Capps, barely nodding to us. We heard him telephone some one, but could not catch the

message, and in a minute he joined us. By this time I had formed the opinion, which I have since found to be correct, that tunnel men are not as a rule loquacious.

It was a new kind of thrill to me to go under the "air," as the men called it. With an instinctive last look at the skyline of New York and the waves playing in the glad sunlight, we entered a rude construction elevator and dropped from the surface to the bottom of a deep shaft. It was like going down into a mine. There was the air-lock, studded with bolts, and looking just like a huge boiler, turned horizontally.

The heavy iron door swung shut with a bang as Paddy and Capps, followed by Kennedy and myself, crept into the air-lock. Paddy turned on a valve, and compressed air from the tunnel began to rush in with a hiss as of escaping steam. Pound after pound to the square inch the pressure slowly rose until I felt sure the drums of my ears would burst. Then the hissing noise began to dwindle down to a wheeze, and then it stopped all of a sudden. That meant that the air-pressure in the lock was the same as that in the tunnel. Paddy pushed open the door in the other end of the lock from that by which we had entered.

Along the bottom of the completed tube we followed Paddy and Capps. On we trudged, fanned by the moist breath of the

tunnel. Every few feet an incandescent light gleamed in the misty darkness. After perhaps a hundred paces we had to duck down under a semicircular partition covering the upper half of the tube.

"What is that?" I shouted at Paddy, the nasal ring of my own voice startling me.

"Emergency curtain," he shouted back.

Words were economized. Later, I learned that should the tunnel start to flood, the other half of the emergency curtain could be dropped so as to cut off the in-rushing water.

Men passed, pushing little cars full of "muck" or sand taken out from before the "shield"—which is the head by which this mechanical mole advances under the river-bed. These men and others who do the shoveling are the "muckers."

Pipes laid along the side of the tunnel conducted compressed air and fresh water, while electric light and telephone wires were strung all about. These and the tools and other things strewn along the tunnel obstructed the narrow passage to such an extent that we had to be careful in picking our way.

At last we reached the shield, and on hands and knees we crawled out into one of its compartments. Here we experienced for the first time the weird realization that only the "air" stood between us and destruction from the tons and tons of sand and water overhead. At



Her long fur coat was flying carelessly, unfastened in the cold night air

The Sand-Hog

some points in the sand we could feel the air escaping, which appeared at the surface of the river overhead in bubbles, indicating to those passing in the river boats just how far each tunnel heading below had proceeded. When the loss of air became too great, I learned, scows would dump hundreds of tons of clay overhead to make an artificial river bed for the shield to stick its nose safely through, for if the river bed became too thin overhead the "air" would blow a hole in it.

Capps, it seemed to me, was unusually anxious to have the visit over. At any rate, while Kennedy and Paddy were still crawling about the shield, he stood aside, now and then giving the men an order and apparently forgetful of us.

My own curiosity was quickly satisfied, and I sat down on a pile of the segments out of which the successive rings of the tunnel were made. As I sat there waiting for Kennedy, I absently reached into my pocket and pulled out a cigarette and lighted it. It burned amazingly fast, as if it were made of tinder, the reason being the excess of oxygen in the compressed air. I was looking at it in astonishment, when suddenly I felt a blow on my hand. It was Capps.

"You chump!" he shouted as he ground the cigarette under his boot. "Don't you know it is dangerous to smoke in compressed air?"

"Why, no," I replied, smothering my anger at his manner. "No one said anything about it."

"Well, it is dangerous, and Orton's a fool to let greenhorns come in here."

"And to whom may it be dangerous?" I heard a voice inquire over my shoulder. It was Kennedy. "To Mr. Jameson or the rest of us?"

"Well," answered Capps, "I supposed everybody knew it was reckless, and that he would hurt himself more by one smoke in the air than with a hundred up above. That's all."

He turned on Kennedy sullenly, and started to walk back up the tunnel. But I could not help thinking that his manner was anything but solicitude for my own health. I could just barely catch his words over the tunnel telephone some feet away. I thought he said that everything was going along all right and that he was about to start back again. Then he disappeared in the mist of the tube without even nodding a farewell.

Kennedy and I remained standing, not far

from the outlet of the pipe by which the compressed air was being supplied in the tunnel from the compressors above, in order to keep the pressure up to the constant level necessary. I saw Kennedy give a hurried glance about, as if to note whether anyone were looking at us. No one was. With a quick motion he reached down. In his hand was a stout little glass flask with a tight-fitting metal top. For a second he held it near the outlet of the pipe; then he snapped the top shut and slipped it back into his pocket as quickly as he had produced it.

Slowly we commenced to retrace our steps to the air-lock, our curiosity satisfied by this glimpse of one of the most remarkable developments of modern engineering.

"Where's Paddy?" asked Kennedy, stopping suddenly. "We've forgotten him."

"Back there at the shield, I suppose," said I. "Let's whistle and attract his attention."

I pursed up my lips, but if I had been whistling for a million dollars I couldn't have done it.

Craig laughed. "Walter, you are indeed learning many strange things. You can't whistle in compressed air."

I was too chagrined to answer. First it was Capps; now it was my own friend Kennedy chaffing me for my ignorance. I was glad to see Paddy's huge form looming in the semi-darkness. He had seen that we were gone and hurried after us.

"Won't ye stay down an' see some more, gentlemen?" he asked. "Or have ye had enough of the air? It seems very smelly to me this mornin'—I don't blame ye. I guess them as doesn't have to stay here is satisfied with a few minutes of it."

"No, thanks, I guess we needn't stay down any longer," replied Craig. "I think I have seen all that is necessary—at least for the present. Capps has gone out ahead of us. I think you can take us out now, Paddy. I would much rather have you do it than to go with anybody else."

Coming out, I found, was really more dangerous than going in, for it is while coming out of the "air" that men are liable to get the bends. Roughly, half a minute should be consumed in coming out from each pound of pressure, though for such high pressures as we had been under, considerably more time was required in order to do it safely. We spent about half an hour in the air-lock, I should judge.

Paddy let the air out of the lock by turning on a valve leading to the outside, normal atmosphere. Thus he let the air out rapidly at first until we had got down to half the pressure of the tunnel. The second half he did slowly, and it was indeed tedious, but it was safe. There was at first a hissing sound when he opened the valve, and it grew colder in the lock, since air absorbs heat from surrounding objects when it expands. We were glad to draw sweaters on over our heads. It also grew as misty as a London fog as the water-vapor in the air was condensed.

At last the hiss of escaping air ceased. The door to the modern dungeon of science grated open. We walked out of the lock to the elevator shaft and were hoisted up to God's air again. We gazed out across the river with its waves dancing in the sunlight. There, out in the middle, was a wreath of bubbles on the water. That marked the end of the tunnel, over the shield. Down beneath those bubbles the sand-hogs were rooting. But what was the mystery that the tunnel held in its dark, dank bosom? Had Kennedy a clue?

"I think we had better wait around a bit," remarked Kennedy, as we sipped our hot coffee in the dressing-room and warmed ourselves from the chill of coming out of the lock. "In case anything should happen to us and we should get the bends, this is the place for us, near the medical lock, as it is called—that big steel cylinder over there, where we found Orton. The best cure for the bends is to go back under the air—recompression they call it. The renewed pressure causes the gas in the blood to contract again, and thus it is eliminated—sometimes. At any rate, it is the best-known cure and considerably reduces the pain in the worst cases. When you have a bad case like Orton's it means that the damage is done; the gas has ruptured some veins. Paddy was right. Only time will cure that."

Nothing happened to us, however, and in a couple of hours we dropped in on Orton at the hospital where he was slowly convalescing.

"What do you think of the case?" he asked anxiously.

"Nothing as yet," replied Craig, "but I have set certain things in motion which will give us a pretty good line in a day or so."

Orton's face fell, but he said nothing. He bit his lip nervously and looked out of the

sun-parlor at the roofs of New York around him.

"What has happened since last night to increase your anxiety, Jack?" asked Craig sympathetically.

Orton wheeled his chair about slowly, faced us, and drew a letter from his pocket. Laying it flat on the table he covered the lower part with the envelope.

"Read that," he said.

"Dear Jack," it began. I saw at once that it was from Miss Taylor. "Just a line," she wrote, "to let you know that I am thinking about you always and hoping that you are better than when I saw you this evening. Papa had the chairman of the board of directors of the Five-Borough here late tonight, and they were in the library for over an hour. For your sake, Jack, I played the eavesdropper, but they talked so low that I could hear nothing, though I know they were talking about you and the tunnel. When they came out, I had no time to escape, so I slipped behind a portière. I heard father say: 'Yes, I guess you are right, Morris. The thing has gone on long enough. If there is one more big accident we shall have to compromise with the Inter-River and carry on the work jointly. We have given Orton his chance, and if they demand that this other fellow shall be put in, I suppose we shall have to concede it.' Mr. Morris seemed pleased that father agreed with him and said so. Oh, Jack, can't you *do* something to show them they are wrong, and do it quickly? I never miss an opportunity of telling papa it is not your fault that all these delays take place."

The rest of the letter was covered by the envelope, and Orton would not have shown it for worlds.

"Orton," said Kennedy, after a few moments' reflection, "I will take a chance for your sake—a long chance, but I think a good one. If you can pull yourself together by this afternoon, be over at your office at four. Be sure to have Shelton and Capps there, and you can tell Mr. Taylor that you have something very important to set before him. Now, I must hurry if I am to fulfil my part of the contract. Good-by, Jack. Keep a stiff upper lip, old man. I'll have something that will surprise you this afternoon."

Outside, as he hurried up-town, Craig was silent, but I could see his features working nervously, and as we parted he merely said: "Of course, you'll be there, Walter. I'll

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put the finishing touches on your story of high finance."

Slowly enough the few hours passed before I found myself again in Orton's office. He was there already, despite the orders of his physician, who was disgusted at this excursion from the hospital. Kennedy was there, too, grim and silent. We sat watching the two indicators beside Orton's desk, which showed the air pressure in the two tubes. The needles were vibrating ever so little and tracing a red-ink line on the ruled paper that unwound from the drum. From the moment the tunnels were started, here was preserved a faithful record of every slightest variation of air pressure.

"Telephone down into the tube and have Capps come up," said Craig at length, glancing at Orton's desk clock. "Taylor will be here pretty soon, and I want Capps to be out of the tunnel by the time he comes. Then get Shelton, too."

In response to Orton's summons Capps and Shelton came into the office, just as a large town car pulled up outside the tunnel works. A tall, distinguished-looking man stepped out and turned again toward the door of the car.

"There's Taylor," I remarked, for I had seen him often at investigations before the Public Service Commission.

"And Vivian, too," exclaimed Orton excitedly. "Say, fellows, clear off these desks. Quick, before she gets up here. In the closet with these blue-prints, Walter. There, that's a little better. If I had known she was coming I would at least have had the place swept out. Puff! look at the dust on this desk of mine. Well, there's no help for it. There they are at the door now. Why, Vivian, what a surprise."

"Jack!" she exclaimed, almost ignoring the rest of us and quickly crossing to his chair to lay a restraining hand on his shoulder as he vainly tried to stand up to welcome her.

"Why didn't you tell me you were coming?" he asked eagerly. "I would have had the place fixed up a bit."

"I prefer it this way," she said, looking curiously around at the samples of tunnel paraphernalia and the charts and diagrams on the walls.

"Yes, Orton," said President Taylor, "she would come—dropped in at the office and when I tried to excuse myself for a business appointment, demanded which way I

was going. When I said I was coming here, she insisted on coming, too."

Orton smiled. He knew that she had taken this simple and direct means of being there, but he said nothing, and merely introduced us to the president and Miss Taylor.

An awkward silence followed. Orton cleared his throat. "I think you all know why we are here," he began. "We have been and are having altogether too many accidents in the tunnel, too many cases of the bends, too many deaths, too many delays to the work. Well—er—I—er—Mr. Kennedy has something to say about them, I believe."

No sound was heard save the vibration of the air-compressors and an occasional shout of a workman at the shaft leading down to the air-locks.

"There is no need for me to say anything about caisson disease to you, gentlemen, or to you, Miss Taylor," began Kennedy. "I think you all know how it is caused and a good deal about it already. But, to be perfectly clear, I will say that there are five things that must, above all others, be looked after in tunnel work: the air pressure, the amount of carbon dioxide in the air, the length of the shifts which the men work, the state of health of the men as near as physical examination can determine it, and the rapidity with which the men come out of the 'air,' so as to prevent carelessness which may cause the bends.

"I find," he continued, "that the air pressure is not too high for safety. Proper examinations for carbon dioxide are made, and the amount in the air is not excessive. The shifts are not even as long as those prescribed by the law. The medical inspection is quite adequate and as for the time taken in coming out through the locks the rules are stringent."

A look of relief crossed the face of Orton at this commendation of his work, followed by a puzzled expression that plainly indicated that he would like to know what was the matter, if all the crucial things were all right.

"But," resumed Kennedy, "the bends are still hitting the men, and there is no telling when a fire or a blow-out may occur in any of the eight headings that are now being pushed under the river. Quite often the work has been delayed and the tunnel partly or wholly flooded. Now, you know the theory of the bends. It is that air—mostly

the nitrogen in the air—is absorbed by the blood under the pressure. In coming out of the 'air' if the nitrogen is not all eliminated, it stays in the blood and, as the pressure is reduced, it expands. It is just as if you take a bottle of charged water and pull the cork suddenly. The gas rises in big bubbles. Cork it again and the gas bubbles cease to rise and finally disappear. If you make a pin-hole in the cork the gas will escape slowly, without a bubble. You must decompress the human body slowly, by stages, to let the super-saturated blood give up its nitrogen to the lungs, which can eliminate it. Otherwise these bubbles catch in the veins, and the result is severe pains, paralysis, and even death. Gentlemen, I see that I am just wasting time telling you this, for you know it all well. But consider."

Kennedy placed an empty corked flask on the table. The others regarded it curiously, but I recalled having seen it in the tunnel.

"In this bottle," explained Kennedy, "I collected some of the air from the tunnel when I was down there this morning. I have since analyzed it. The quantity of carbon dioxide is approximately what it should be—not high enough of itself to cause trouble. But," he spoke slowly to emphasize his words, "I found something else in that air besides carbon dioxide."

"Nitrogen?" broke in Orton, leaning forward.

"Of course; it is a constituent of air. But that is not what I mean."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, what did you find?" asked Orton.

"I found in this air," replied Kennedy, "a very peculiar mixture—an explosive mixture."

"An explosive mixture?" echoed Orton.

"Yes, Jack, the blow-outs that you have had at the end of the tunnel were not blow-outs at all, properly speaking. They were explosions."

We sat aghast at this revelation. "And, furthermore," added Kennedy, "I should, if I were you, call

back all the men from the tunnel until the cause for the presence of this explosive mixture is discovered and remedied."

Orton reached mechanically for the telephone to give the order, but Taylor laid his hand on his arm. "One moment, Orton," he said. "Let's hear Professor Kennedy out. He may be mistaken, and there is no use frightening the men, until we are certain."

"Shelton," asked Kennedy, "what sort of flash oil is used to lubricate the machinery?"

"It is three-hundred-and-sixty-degree Fahrenheit flash test," he answered tersely.

"And are the pipes leading air down into the tunnel perfectly straight?"

"Straight?"

"Yes, straight—no joints, no pockets where oil, moisture, and gases can collect."

"Straight as lines, Kennedy," he said with a sort of contemptuous defiance.



"You chump!" he shouted as he ground the cigarette under his boot. "Don't you know it is dangerous to smoke in compressed air?"

They were facing each other coldly, sizing each other up. Like a skilful lawyer, Kennedy dropped that point for a moment, to take up a new line of attack.

"Capps," he demanded, turning suddenly, "why do you always call up on the telephone and let some one know when you are going down in the tunnel and when you are coming out?"

"I don't," replied Capps, quickly recovering his composure.

"Walter," said Craig to me quietly, "go out in the outer office. Behind the telephone switchboard you will find a small box which you saw me carry in there this morning and connect with the switchboard. Detach the wires, as you saw me attach them, and bring it here."

No one moved, as I placed the box on a drafting-table before them. Craig opened it. Inside he disclosed a large disk of thin steel, like those used by some mechanical music-boxes, only without any perforations. He connected the wires from the box to a sort of megaphone. Then he started the disk revolving.

Out of the little megaphone horn, sticking up like a miniature talking-machine, came a voice: "Number please. Four four three o, Yorkville. Busy, I'll call you. Try them again Central. Hello, hello, Central—"

Kennedy stopped the machine. "It must be further along on the disk," he remarked. "This, by the way, is an instrument known as the telegraphone, invented by a Dane named Poulsen. It records conversations over a telephone on this plain metal disk by means of localized, minute electric charges."

Having adjusted the needle to another place of the disk he tried again. "We have here a record of the entire day's conversations over the telephone, preserved on this disk. I could wipe out the whole thing by pulling a magnet across it, but, needless to say, I wouldn't do that—yet. Listen."

This time it was Capps speaking. "Give me Mr. Shelton. Oh, Shelton, I'm going down in the south tube with those men Orton has sent nosing around here. I'll let you know when I start up again. Meanwhile—you know—don't let anything happen while I am there. Good-by."

Capps sat looking defiantly at Kennedy, as he stopped the telegraphone.

"Now," continued Kennedy, suavely, "what *could* happen? I'll answer my own

question by telling what actually did happen. Oil that was smoky at a lower point than its flash was being used in the machinery—not really three-hundred-and-sixty-degree oil. The water-jacket had been tampered with, too. More than that, there is a joint in the pipe leading down into the tunnel, where explosive gases can collect. It is a well-known fact in the use of compressed air that such a condition is the best possible way to secure an explosion.

"It would all seem so natural, even if discovered," explained Kennedy, rapidly. "The smoking oil—smoking just as an automobile often does—is passed into the compressed-air pipe. Condensed oil, moisture, and gases collect in the joint, and perhaps they line the whole distance of the pipe. A spark from the low-grade oil—and they are ignited. What takes place is the same thing that occurs in the cylinder of an automobile where the air is compressed with gasoline vapor. Only here we have compressed air charged with vapor of oil. The flame proceeds down the pipe—exploding through the pipe, if it happens to be not strong enough. This pipe, however, is strong. Therefore, the flame in this case shoots out at the open end of the pipe, down near the shield, and if the air in the tunnel happens also to be surcharged with oil-vapor, an explosion takes place in the tunnel—the river bottom is blown out—then God help the sand-hogs!"

"That's how your accidents took place, Orton," concluded Kennedy in triumph, "and that impure air—not impure from carbon dioxide, but from this oil-vapor mixture—increased the liability of the men for the bends. Capps knew about it. He was careful while he was there to see that the air was made as pure as possible under the circumstances. He was so careful that he wouldn't even let Mr. Jameson smoke in the tunnel. But as soon as he went to the surface, the same deadly mixture was pumped down again—I caught some of it in this flask, and—"

"My God, Paddy's down there now," cried Orton, suddenly seizing his telephone. "Operator, give me the south tube—quick—what—they don't answer?"

Out in the river above the end of the heading, where a short time before there had been only a few bubbles on the surface of the water, I could see what looked like a huge geyser of water spouting up. I pulled Craig over to me and pointed.

"A blow-out," cried Kennedy, as he rushed to the door, only to be met by a group of blanched-faced workers who had come breathless to the office to deliver the news.

Craig acted quickly. "Hold these men," he ordered, pointing to Capps and Shelton, "until we come back. Orton, while we are gone, go over the entire day's record on the telegraphphone. I suspect you and Miss Taylor will find something there that will interest you."

He sprang down the ladder to the tunnel air-lock, not waiting for the elevator. In front of the closed door of the lock, an excited group of men was gathered. One of them was peering through the dim, thick, glass porthole in the door.

"There he is, standin' by the door with a club, an' the men's crowdin' so fast that they're all wedged so's none can get in at all. He's beatin' 'em back with the stick. Now, he's got the door clear and has dragged one poor fellow in. It's Jimmy Rourke, him with the eight childer. Now he's dragged in a Polack. Now he's fightin' back a big Jamaica nigger who's tryin' to shove ahead of a little Italian."

"It's Paddy," cried Craig. "If he can bring them all out safely without the loss of a life he'll save the day yet for Orton. And he'll do it."

Instantly I reconstructed in my mind the scene in the tunnel—the explosion of the oil-vapor, the mad race up the tube, perhaps the failure of the emergency curtain to work, the frantic efforts of the men, in panic, all to crowd through the narrow little door at once; the rapidly rising water—and above all the heroic Paddy, cool to the last, standing at the door and single-handed beating the men back with a club, so that one could go through at a time.

Only when the water had reached the level of the door of the lock, did Paddy bang it shut as he dragged the last man in. Then followed an interminable wait for the air in the lock to be exhausted. When, at last, the door at our end of the lock swung open, the men with a cheer seized Paddy and, in spite of his struggles, hoisted him on to their shoulders, and carried him off, still struggling, in triumph up the elevator to the open air.

The scene in Orton's office was dramatic, as the men entered with Paddy. Vivian Taylor was standing defiantly, with burning eyes, facing Capps, who stared sullenly at the floor before him. Shelton was plainly abashed.

"Kennedy," cried Orton, vainly trying to rise, "listen. Have you still that place on the telegraphphone record, Vivian?"

Miss Taylor started the telegraphphone, while we all crowded around leaning forward eagerly.

"Hello. Inter-River? Is this the president's office? Oh, hello. This is Capps talking. How are you? Oh, you've heard about Orton, have you? Not so bad, eh? Well, I'm arranging with my man Shelton here for the final act this afternoon. After that you can compromise with the Five-Borough on your own terms. I think I have argued Taylor and Morris into the right frame of mind for it, if we have one more big accident. What's that? How is my love affair? Well, Orton's in the way yet, but you know why I went into this deal. When you put me into his place after the compromise, I think I will pull strong with her. Saw her last night. She feels pretty bad about Orton, but she'll get over it. Besides, the pater will never let her marry a man who's down and out. By the way, you've got to do something handsome for Shelton. All right. I'll see you to-night and tell you some more. Watch the papers in the meantime for the grand finale. Good-by."

An angry growl rose from one or two of the more quick-witted men. Kennedy reached over and pulled me with him quickly through the crowd.

"Hurry, Walter," he whispered hoarsely, "hustle Shelton and Capps out quick before the rest of the men wake up to what it's all about, or we shall have a lynching instead of an arrest."

As we shoved and pushed them out, I saw the rough and grimy sand-hogs in the rear move quickly aside, and off came their muddy, frayed hats. A dainty figure flitted among them toward Orton. It was Vivian Taylor.

"Papa," she cried, grasping Jack by both hands and turning to Taylor, who followed her closely, "Papa, I told you not to be too hasty with Jack."

The next mystery story, "*The Bacillus of Death*," will appear in the January issue.



"Prettier!" sneered the schatchen. "Can you pay rent with good looks? I thought you wanted to marry for money?"

Aschenbroedel

The old romancers did not tell all the good stories. There are plenty left—and Bruno Lessing is one of the shrewdest writers in the business at picking them out. He is story-teller-in-chief of New York's famous East Side—the "melting-pot" of the nations. There truth is stranger than fiction, for the gamut of the whole world's emotions is run each day among its burdened people. Taking a custom which still holds among the Jewish citizens, Bruno Lessing has made out of it, and a little Ghetto Cinderella, one of the best stories he has ever told

By Bruno Lessing

Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker

REB LITWAK sat by the kitchen stove most of the time, playing doleful tunes upon an antiquated guitar. He was old, oh! very, very old, and he had no teeth, and there seemed nothing that he could do but play tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, all the livelong day. They were ancient Hebrew melodies that he was playing, although no one would ever have imagined it. Even Leah, who did all the housework, frequently asked him why he did not play a tune that some one knew, but the old man only smiled and kept on playing tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink. And then Leah would smile, too, and pat him

gently on the head and go on with her housework.

The housework of Leah consisted in ministering to the comfort of Litwak, the tailor, son of Reb Litwak, and making home life a bed of roses for Sarah, the tailor's daughter. Leah was some sort of distant relative who had been sent over from Minsk in Russia to the care of the Litwaks after all her blood kin had been massacred in a religious uprising. She was about Sarah's age, and the two girls had been bosom friends until Sarah observed that Leah's complexion was far superior to her own. After which observation Leah became the family drudge. The

tailor was too busy making money to bother about family details. And his father, the Reb, gave no intimation that he had the faintest idea of what was going on. He just sat in his corner and played tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, on his old guitar. Not that his son and granddaughter were in any way lacking in respect or attentiveness to the old man. Oh, dear, no! Reb Litwak had money—money in the bank, money in his pockets that he was afraid to trust to banks, and money in the mattress of his bed and in the lining of the chair on which he sat that he was afraid to trust to his pockets. But he was so dreadfully old and took so little interest in things that they never thought it worth while to bother him about family matters. In fact, the situation was perfectly clear to only Leah and Sarah—probably clearer to Leah.

"Oh, by the way," remarked Litwak, the tailor, one night at supper, "Cohen, the schatchen, came to see me to-day, Sarah. He says he has a good match for you. Leah, you put too much salt in the dumplings. So I told him to come around some night and bring his party with him."

Sarah tossed her head contemptuously, yet her eyes sparkled as she said:

"Oh, dear. I'm not in a hurry to marry. If I don't like the man I won't marry him, anyway."

Between mouthfuls of dumpling her father replied:

"Girls are nuisances. I suppose he will want a dowry; nobody does anything for nothing, nowadays. But your clothes cost a lot of money, so I guess it will be cheaper if you get married. Is it not true, grandfather?"

But the old man only smiled and played tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, on his guitar.

"Besides," continued the tailor, "what is the use of two girls in the house? Leah can do all the cooking. You only cost money, Sarah mine."

"I am not a servant," replied Sarah scornfully.

Her father carefully finished another dumpling and then replied sorrowfully,

"No; you are an eater and a dresser."

The following day, while they were alone, Leah said to the Reb:

"Isn't it strange that the Jews have no one to pray to who will give them things? When I was standing in front of the house last night the policeman was telling me that

he used to pray for things and always got them until he grew up. I guess he isn't as good as he used to be when he was a boy. Sarah doesn't have to pray; she has everything she wants. I have lots of things to pray for, but nobody to pray to. I guess it's wrong to pray for things; you get what you deserve in the world, anyway."

She was merely rattling off the thoughts that came into her head, without the faintest idea of consulting the old man, but he stopped playing on the guitar to listen to her, and when she had finished and resumed her sweeping he smiled and went on with his tinkle-tink.

A few nights later Leah, her day's work done, was sitting on the steps of the tenement-house, enjoying the crisp night air, when two men paused before the house to look at the number, and one of them, a shrewd-eyed, elderly man, asked her,

"Does Litwak, the tailor, live here?"

"Yes, sir. Third floor, rear," she replied.

The man's companion, a good-looking chap of twenty-five or thereabouts, looked at her keenly and with a pleasant smile asked,

"Are you his daughter?"

Leah shook her head. "I'm Miss Litwak's cousin."

The young man looked disappointed. As the two disappeared into the house Leah's friend, the policeman, approached her.

"Who is your friend?" he asked, smiling.

Leah shrugged her shoulders. "He's a husband being brought around for my cousin."

"Are you sure he's not being brought around for you?"

Leah laughed. "Who would bring a husband for me? I have no money. My cousin will get a lot. My uncle was saying the other day that nobody does anything for nothing, nowadays."

The policeman looked at her with a broad grin. "Your uncle is a wonder. I'll bet he would be ashamed to tell what he would be willing to do for a million dollars."

Then they both laughed, for the policeman had a hearty, Irish laugh that was wonderfully infectious.

"Listen, now, dark-eyes," he said, in a tragic whisper. "I've got a fellow in mind that I'd like to bring around here one o' these days. Are ye really thinking o' marrying? Y' know you're kind of young."

"I'm eighteen," Leah replied proudly. "But—if I haven't got a cent—who would want me?"

"I'll see ye later," said the policeman hastily, as he hurried off. A moment later Leah saw a roundsman turn the corner. Some instinct must have warned her policeman to resume his patrol.

In the meantime the schatchen had formally presented young Melikoff to the Litwak family.

"I am in luck," thought Sarah; "he is fine looking."

The young man, however, seemed strangely bashful. Instead of taking the chair which Sarah drew close to her own, he seated himself near the schatchen, grasped him firmly by the sleeve, and began to whisper to him.

"Two thousand dollars," Litwak, the tailor, said; "in cash."

Young Melikoff whispered in the schatchen's ear.

"Has her cousin a dowry, too?" asked the schatchen.

The tailor looked at him in surprise. "Leah, you mean? Oh, dear, no! She works for us."

The young man looked disappointed.

Sarah, considerably nettled, uttered a sarcastic laugh. "Leah is a nice girl," she said. "I have made up my mind that when I get married I shall keep her for a servant."

The young man glanced furtively at Sarah and then, allowing his eyes to roam around the room, he encountered the smiling, blinking gaze of Reb Litwak. But the Reb said nothing—only played tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, on his ancient guitar and continued to smile. Then the young man whispered into the schatchen's ear again.

"It is a pity," said the schatchen, "that the cousin has no dowry. I could so easily find a nice husband for her."

But there was no response from the tailor, who puffed at his pipe and waited patiently for the schatchen to come to business.

"Will you excuse me," asked the schatchen, "if I take my party in the other room and talk private?"

Litwak nodded; such things were quite customary in transactions of that kind. When the door was closed behind them, the schatchen's whole manner changed. "Fool," he whispered hoarsely, to young Melikoff, "what is the matter with you? Do you want to spoil everything? Two thousand dollars— isn't that enough for you?"

"But the girl at the door was prettier," protested the young man.

"Prettier!" sneered the schatchen. "Can you pay rent with good looks? I thought you wanted to marry for money?"

The young man sighed. "I guess you're right," he said. "Go ahead; I'll take her."

When Leah came in that night Sarah threw her arms around her. "Kiss me, Leah," she cried. "I'm engaged."

A day was fixed for the betrothal ceremony, an affair as elaborate and almost as important in orthodox Jewish life as the wedding itself, and in the meantime Melikoff was a daily visitor at the Litwak home. On the night after the arrangement had been made with the schatchen, he came with three tickets for the theater and proposed that Leah accompany them.

"Oh, I guess not," said Sarah haughtily. "She has her work to do at home."

Leah turned to hide a smile and glanced mischievously at the Reb. But the old man said nothing—only played tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, on his old guitar.

After that, however, the young man never proposed the theater again. He seemed to prefer to remain in the room with the family and gaze upon Leah. One afternoon he called unexpectedly. Leah and the Reb were alone. His face lit up with pleasure when he beheld the girl, and seating himself close to the old man he plunged cheerfully into the most animated conversation that Leah had ever heard from his lips. The old Reb, however, seemed downcast and played his tinkle-tink very slowly and dolefully.

"Leah," said Melikoff with a sigh, "I wish you had a nice dowry. I would marry you instead of Sarah."

Leah burst into hearty laughter. "What an idea!" she exclaimed. "How do you know I would marry you?"

"Oh, I would make love to you so nicely and say such sweet things you couldn't help yourself. Not the way I talk to Sarah at all." And then, "Reb," said he, "why don't you give Leah a nice dowry? Surely you can afford it."

He was gazing at Leah's face as he spoke, and consequently did not see the sudden light of fury that blazed, for an instant only, in the old man's eyes. But the old man said nothing—only played tinkle-tink quite rapidly on his guitar.

"The man I marry," said Leah simply, "must take me for myself. There will be

no dowry. I—I am glad there will be none."

The old Reb began to play with great enthusiasm, and Leah, who understood his moods, patted him affectionately upon the cheek because she knew he was pleased with her.

"But, Leah," protested the young man, "you know I—I love you."

Leah looked at him in surprise, and in his eyes she read that he was telling the truth. "Don't be foolish," she said. "Sarah is a nice girl. You will have a nice dowry."

"Leah! Leah!" he cried, and approaching her seized her hand and was about to kiss it when the door opened and Sarah entered. Melikoff gazed at her sheepishly for a moment and then with a broad grin said:

"And the other actress walked across the stage. So he got on his knees—" Then turning to Sarah he said, "I was telling her about a funny play." Sarah looked mightily relieved.

It was the night before the betrothal ceremony. Litwak, the tailor, sat reading his Jewish newspaper. Sarah and her young man were discussing the coming event. Leah was sitting idly by the window, gazing at the swarm of stars that filled the sky. Reb Litwak sat by the fireside, playing his

eternal tinkle-tink, tinkle-tink, upon the guitar. There came a thunderous rap upon the door, and before a word could be spoken a huge individual, tall and broad shouldered, red cheeked and bubbling over with health and animal spirits, strode heavily into the room and looked around him.

"Where's the little girl?" he demanded.

His voice, like his presence, seemed to fill the entire room.

With a glad little cry Leah sprang from her chair. "It's the policeman!" she exclaimed.

"Why, sure it is," he replied, ignoring all the others. "Who else should it be?"

"But where is your blue suit and your badge? Ain't you a policeman any more?"

He laughed heartily. "You bet I am. I'm a bigger policeman now. I was made a roundsman today, and I've taken a day off to celebrate. You'd better be careful or I'll arrest the whole lot of

you. But—" He suddenly paused and gazed helplessly around the room. Then, with a hearty laugh, "Why, Leah, you haven't even introduced me."

"Oh, I forgot. This is my uncle. This is Sarah, my cousin, and Mr. Melikoff, and this is the Reb, my granduncle. And this—this—" She looked at him for a moment in utter bewilderment. "Why, do you know," she said falteringly, "I don't know your name."



"The man I marry," said Leah simply, "must take me for myself. There will be no dowry. I—I am glad there will be none"

Whereupon the policeman and all the others burst into a roar of laughter. Leah, red with embarrassment, turned instinctively to the Reb.

"I don't care. What difference does a name make, anyway? I've always called him Mr. Policeman, and I've known him over a year. Haven't I, Reb? Haven't I often told you about the policeman?"

The Reb raised his head, and gathering himself as for a mighty effort croaked,

"Yes!"

As he had not been known to utter a word in months, the family instantly became subdued, and then suddenly Leah's whole being became aroused to a sense of some great impending event.

"My name is Clancy—Thomas Clancy. You're the girl's only relative, are ye not?" Litwak, the tailor, nodded assent. "Well, I want to marry the little girl. That is," turning quickly to Leah, "if she'll have me. I told ye I was going to bring some one around for ye, didn't I? Well, it's meself. Ye see, I've seen her so often and I've thought so much about her that I kind of forgot that I hadn't even spoken to her about it. And, besides, I wanted to make sure of me promotion before I asked her. I just got the news a half-hour ago, and I hurried right here. What d'ye say, little one? And you, old man?"

Leah's heart was beating tumultuously. Her brain was in a whirl. She could not think, could not speak. But the joy that surged through her whole being, the sweetness that seemed suddenly to have come into life, could have had no sudden birth. And now, in a luminous flash, came the realization that she had lived for this moment, that it had been her policeman who was ever in her mind and heart.

"But—but," stammered Litwak, "you are a Christian!"

"Sure I am," replied the policeman. "Eut what's the odds? I guess it's the same God that made us all. And if it isn't—why, what's the odds, anyway? What d'ye say, little one? Don't bother about the religion. We'll settle that some other time—ten years from now, or thirty years. Ye can take yer pick of all the religions in the world. I'd want ye just as bad if ye were a Chinese girl."

They had all become so absorbed in gazing first at the policeman and then at Leah that no one had noticed how the old Reb, forgetful of his guitar, which had gradually slipped to the floor, sat crouched forward, with his hand to his ear so that not a single word might escape him and his lips moving rapidly as if he were struggling to speak, but could not utter a sound.

"Come, dark-eyes," coaxed the stalwart policeman. "Will ye marry me?"

Leah's eyes were dancing. She had never looked so beautiful before. "But I told you that I have no dowry," she said demurely.

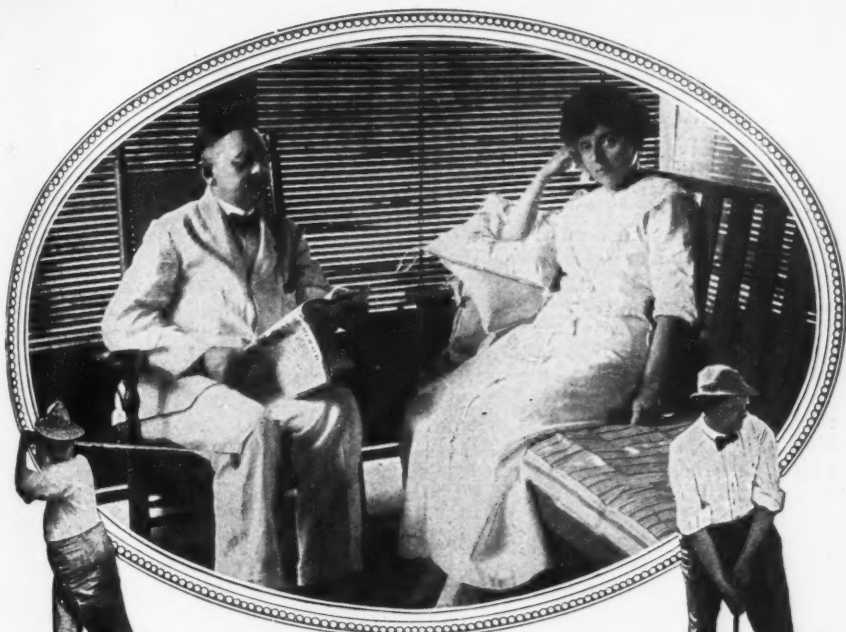
The policeman stamped on the floor with vexation. "T'ell with the dowry!" he exclaimed. "I don't want any money. I'm asking ye if ye'll marry me. Please—please, little one, don't keep me waiting. It's breaking me heart!"

With a cry of purest joy Leah sprang forward and threw herself into his arms, and the next moment they were hugging and kissing each other, oblivious of their surroundings, and would in all probability have kept it up indefinitely had not a sudden crash in the farthest corner of the room attracted everyone's attention. The Reb had raised himself from his chair, which had toppled over in the struggle, and was tottering forward. Leah, frightened at this unusual action—he had not risen without assistance in years—ran to his side. But the old man, with long, unsteady strides, advanced toward the policeman, and steadying himself by seizing Clancy's strong arm, cried in a piercing, squeaky voice:

"Yess! You get dowry! Big dowry! Efry cent I haf you get—you unt Leah! Hell mit dowry!" He turned and gazed spitefully at Sarah's future husband. "Hell mit dowry iss good. I got money. Leah get big dowry. Efry cent. Efry cent."

And then, overcome by such unwonted exertion, the old man collapsed and would have fallen had not the policeman caught him and carried him gently to his chair. Sarah, entirely bewildered by the whole occurrence, turned to her fiancé for enlightenment. Melikoff's countenance had assumed a sickly greenish hue.





Oscar W. Underwood, Democratic House leader, and Mrs. Underwood, at their home in Birmingham, Alabama. As chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and pilot of the tariff bills which President Taft vetoed because the Tariff Board had not reported, Mr. Underwood has confounded those who prophesied a riot of tariff-tinkering by the Democrats

Underwood—House Leader

By Alfred Henry Lewis

HIS name is Oscar W. Underwood; his years are on the sunshine side of fifty. As chief of the Ways and Means, and chairman of the Committee on Committees, he is Speaker Clark's right arm in the House.

Mr. Underwood's cry is "Tariff for revenue only!" When Mr. Bryan, eaten of a rule-or-ruin spirit, came to Washington at the beginning of the special session to trouble the waters of party hope with an attack upon the wool bill as proposed by the Democrats, Mr. Underwood, in going after Mr. Bryan, stated his own tariff position. Said he: "The Democratic party stands for a tariff for revenue. The Democratic party does not stand for free trade, and I do not

believe the people will be misled by the statement of Mr. Bryan."

That Mr. Underwood is against protection, and fights it, evinces his courage. He comes from the Birmingham district in Alabama—a breeding-ground of protection. In Mr. Underwood's district there are nine railroads, one hundred and forty-eight miles of street-car tracks, \$150,000,000 of invested industries, an annual pig-iron output of 2,000,000 tons, and a production of 15,000,000 tons of coal. The city of Birmingham has an annual pay-roll of \$50,000,000. The Tennessee Coal & Iron Company, which is a part of the Steel Trust, controls one-third of all the products of the district. One-third of all the iron-ore holdings of the

Steel Trust are in and around Birmingham. Surely, at first glance, a bad outlook for a tariff reformer! And yet Mr. Underwood succeeds and re-succeeds himself with ever climbing majorities.

It is the Underwood honesty that does it—that, and his clean courage. The dominant quality in Mr. Underwood is honesty, and folk have found it out. Honesty is among the scarcest of earthly commodities, and when a community has discovered it in the possession of an individual, it guards it and works it like a gold-mine for every final ounce. Mr. Underwood is honest. His election was not the work of money. He was not chosen as either the pet of the railroads or the first-born of the trusts. His seat was given him by the people, and because they believed he would fill it to the best public advantage.

This emanation of the popular gives Mr. Underwood the House high ground, and he is so far military in his genius that he knows how to fortify and hold it. From his place as a people's representative, he can over-stare and keep in check the Paynes and the Dalzells and the Crumpackers, who are present merely by the grace of pirate money, and dwell, therefore, on House levels much lower than his own.

A LEADER IN THE MAKING

Until the present session, Mr. Underwood spent most if not all of his House existence in the ranks of the minority—the Republicans had the House bridge—which is no bad place for a beginner. The House minority offers the opportunity to be great without being dangerous. Also, your apprentice statesman has a chance to learn his trade before he is seriously called upon to work at it. Mr. Underwood received many fortunate years of House minority schooling before he was made to assume actual responsibility as a majority leader.

Clear as a bell, strong as a horse, sound mentally, morally, physically, Mr. Underwood is upholstered by nature to hold his own and attract congressional attention. In no wise nose-led by a bumptious conceit, he possesses that rarest of powers, the power to wait. On coming to the House he did not seek to take the party lead from oldsters who had been there twenty years. Not that he went to sleep at the switch. He knew his own people, knew where they and their interest belonged in the proces-

sion of government. And, for all his easiness of address, he was equal to saying "No!" whenever a negative made for popular right.

In coming to the House, Mr. Underwood was lucky in that he was not too nervously fine. The House is like unto a stone-quarry. It is a place for drills and giant powder. Nothing is done there save by prying or blasting. It is rough, coarse, heavy, lumbering work—work for the crow-bar, not for the sword. All is as rudely coarse as any canebrake bear. It is no place for wool-foot, back-stairs artists. The House is too narrow, too open, too well lighted, for their genius. Your great House man will be one whose nature is not too finely drawn. He will possess qualities of the buffalo-bull kind. In the House, quantity is often greater than quality, and momentum counts for more than being quick.

During the House battle over the Payne bill—that measure of measureless rapacity!—it was my duty, if not my delight, to sit in the gallery, and overhear and oversee the wranglings on the floor below. There were skirmishings over schedules which involved only a few. Now and then some big topic called all hands to the field, and a battle royal would ensue. For the most, however, the war could not be called impressive, by virtue of any splendor of the public ideals uncovered, or white purity of principle displayed, but was simply a merest case of robber rob robber and dog eat dog.

The consumer? He was seldom heard of, never heeded. His position—if such may be called a position—was no more, no less, than that of some fat, dull, unconsidered buffalo which those trade wolves, the protected industries, had pulled down and were tearing to pieces.

VOTE RIGHT—OR LOSE YOUR JOB

It would have been a good public thing if every voter between the oceans had been with me in that House gallery, and given a pointblank look at his representatives in action. He would have discovered how, sent to Washington as the guardians of the people, more than half at least had shifted their allegiance and become the vociferous red-faced agents of the "interests." The trusts did that. No; they did not bribe these turncoats, didn't pay them in coin of the realm to act as Benedict Arnolds of

legislation. They merely threatened them.

There are few if any states where the trusts have not gained, through bank or factory or railroad or store, a foothold, and it was from these coigns of local advantage they domineered over and dictated action to members of the House. Without expanding into detail, I should say that the greatest peril this country labors under is the fear which besets a congressman that he may not succeed himself—a fear which locks his lips, cools his heart, and turns his time-serving subservient nose toward whatever point of the legislative compass the trusts may indicate.

One good thing which may be credited to the Payne tariff battle in the House is that it developed a leader, disclosed a man. The individual who thus stood forth taller than his party fellows was Mr. Underwood. Then, as now, he showed himself a natural captain. Also, he has justified the hopes he bred, by his far-seeing work in this.

In person, Mr. Underwood is of middle height, strongly and—without giving anyone a fatty impression—stockily built. His shoulders are broad enough to excite the approval of an athlete. His chest is as deep as that of a race-

horse. Nor is he overabundant about the waist.

He looks what he is—a man of health and immense if quiet vitality.

Mounted on Mr. Underwood's square shoulders is a square head.

No beard, no mustache, has the freedom of his visage. Every trace is

carefully mowed away with the light of each new day, and when



(C) HARRIS-LEWIS

Among the quartet of Democratic Presidential nomination candidates he is not to be counted last, being neither too young in politics nor too old in years and having a nation-wide popularity

the world meets him he's as smug and smooth as a pulpiter. This groomed effect he carries out by heedfully parting his hair starboard and port.

There is nothing soft, nothing yielding nor effeminate, nothing of the willow, about Mr. Underwood. His eye is bright, his nose an emphatic curve. His mouth is well widened and firm, and the whole face founded on a jaw—the very seat of power—as square hewn and unflinching as if cut from the Devon rock. His whole instinct is conservative. He goes not easily to the new. And this is the story of all well-balanced, well-built men.

THE MANNER OF MAN HE IS

After the Southern manner, Mr. Underwood is unaffectedly democratic. He meets men as one who, respecting himself, also respects them. He does not wear the manner of one who expects to find his inferior. Still less would he remind you of one who fears he may meet his superior. Never does he pose, nor seek to transact his dignity at the humbling expense of another.

The one fault I find with Mr. Underwood is that he makes a specialty of being Southern. I would like him better if he dropped the Southern and made a specialty of being American. This I've said over and over again, in print and out of print, in season and out of season. I want to re-say it here. My eagerness to do so is born of the fact that this adjective "Southern" is constantly getting in the way, not only of the South but of the country.

Speaking for myself, who come from a region where twenty degrees below zero is the common January thing, I am free to confess that I like the Southern man. He is so unadulterated in his Americanism. And yet I must advise against the "Southern." To be a Southern man has its advantages and its disadvantages. For one political thing, the Southern man becomes, through an overdose of that adjective, unduly sentimental. And thus he is frequently found voting for some one he doesn't want, to get something he can't have. In Congress he commonly appears better than does the Northern man. I have never met a Southern congressman who seemed to remember he was in Congress. I have met scores of Northern congressmen who seemed unable to forget it. This is not so much due to aught of inner sort as to the way folk are brought up. The Southern man, by the

mere fact of a nativity, is given an exaggerated opinion of himself. The opinion is all wrong; but, since he can never find it out, he gets as much joy from it as though Gibraltar were its base.

In all chance the Southern man will refuse me his ear in this; and yet I must tell him that, when he thus makes himself of a region, he makes himself small. The man who would have the circle of his influence—like the ring of Saturn—belt a world, must come out of his corner. The great setback to the South itself lies in being "Southern." If I were business manager of the South I should abolish the word. It is much smaller than the word "American," besides being a fallacy. There can be no such thing as a Southern interest, or a Southern question, or a Southern man. The interest of the question or the man is ever and always American. Take the negro question: it is an American, not a Southern question. If you were shot in the arm, would you call it an arm question? If you had tuberculosis, would it be merely a lung question?

Mr. Underwood, while quietly serene, is what they call "magnetic." Men are drawn toward him. He is pleasant to the eye, to the ear, and soothes by his presence and never troubles. He is cool and of even temper. No flush of irritation ever reddens his cheek. His emotions sit steadily, as become the emotions of one who eats thrice a day, scoffs at dyspepsia, and sleeps soundly of nights.

COLD? A "BLAZING ICEBERG"

Books? Mr. Underwood is well, even highly, educated. He has dug through libraries and tunneled learning equal to any musty professor of them all. More than books, he has studied men, and their lives have been his lessons. He has a memory like wax, and all he hears or reads or sees abides with him.

In debate I should not call Mr. Underwood so profound as quick. With an intellect rather military than philosophical, he makes weapons of all he knows, and every scrap of learning belonging to him is at prompt and ready hand, to be either defensive or offensive as his swift genius for combat may decide.

There is nothing of the iceberg about Mr. Underwood, and yet, like the iceberg, most of him is out of sight. He has schooled himself in self-restraint. His nature is warm, at times tropical; but he doesn't let the heat escape.

"Most folks take Underwood for cold," remarked Representative Littleton. "They

ought to lift one of his griddles once. They would find him blazing inside."

Mr. Underwood is faithful in his friendships. To those whom he casually meets, he is affable, albeit non-committal, keeping his own counsel. He is never rude nor hard; never violent, even with blood foes. For the stranger within his gates



"The baby figure of the giant to come"—at fourteen months

them. He answers a question with a round readiness, or says plainly that he can't answer it and tells why. He expedites the business in hand, and will even anticipate the purpose of one's coming, and put questions to himself.

Mr. Underwood's primal characteristics are a genial egotism and—for all he talks so freely—



"A lad of mettle, a good boy"—eight years old



"Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth"—at sixteen

his air is gentle and frank. He is easy to see, and, speaking generally, has been ever careful to keep himself within the reach of all. Newspaper folk, sent to Mr. Underwood by some stress of duty, never fail to like him. He has his dignity, but there is no reserve. He maintains no distances between himself and



(c) HARRIS-ewing

"And statesmen at her council met"—Oscar W. Underwood at thirty-two (center), when he first entered Congress, and as Democratic leader of the present House

secrecy. One must not blame him for that egotism. He is in it neither peculiar nor alone. One finds no violets in Congress. Modest and retiring as some of our Senate and House folk seem, it is no less true of each that sometime, somewhere, somehow, he sat himself down and decided that of the two hundred thousand people in his region, he was the one to pass the laws. Nothing dim

or retiring or reluctant in that! A congressman is ever an egotist. He couldn't have become a congressman without being an egotist. Mr. Underwood has company in that excellent yet narrowly earnest contemplation of himself. Also, it is in his favor that he is never caught looking in the glass when he should be looking from the window. In windows there is hope, in looking-glasses despair.

Kentucky must be given the cradle honors of Mr. Underwood's birth. Born in Louisville in 1862, he comes in all his angles from Blue Grass Vere de Veres. Proud of his Kentucky source, he never fails of its proper mention. Caste in Kentucky falls into four strata. There are the Blue Grass, the B'ar Grass, the Pennyr'yal, and the Purchase. The Blue Grass is the highest caste, and to be of the Blue Grass is to be abreast of royal dukes. Mr. Underwood is Blue Grass, and when time was his grandfather flourished as the Senate colleague of Henry Clay.

The boyhood of Mr. Underwood passed unclouded of privation. The wolf of want came never so near as to disturb him by its howlings. He grew and expanded upon lines common to all urchins. In due time, say at the age of six, he scrubbed his early morning face—as did the Shakespearian urchin—and crept unwillingly to school. He studied a little, quarreled a little, got thrashed a little, played a deal, and made trouble for the teacher, after fashions common and usual with the young males of his species in every age.

Following his graduation from the schools of Louisville, Mr. Underwood attended the University of Virginia. Then he studied law. Then he settled down in Birmingham to practise it.

Law and politics are so much like brandy and water that they mix successfully. Mr. Underwood broke into politics. Naturally, he broke in through the Democratic door. This last was to have been looked for. The Alabama currents swept all one way. Who shall blame Mr. Underwood for going with the stream? To drift is easier than to row, and leads to wider waters. Mr. Underwood, presenting himself for Congress—it was fifteen years ago—cried out against the robbery of protection. In the face of the protected interests which polka-dotted his district, he was chosen.

Mr. Underwood is the best leader that the House Democracy during recent years has

had. The leadership of Mr. Bailey was utterly bad. The leadership of Mr. Williams was good, but might have been better. Mr. Williams has faults of temper, and is not a best of politicians. There is in him too much fight, too little conciliation. He is good at controversy, bad at consultation; excellent in argument while weak in expedients. Moreover, he is a congenital extremist, and does not believe that a half-loaf is better than no bread. Owning not a trace of the trimmer, if set to walk a tight rope he would infallibly have fallen off.

There have been too many Baileys, too many Williamses, at the head of the House Democracy. It was they and their mismanagement which justified old Ben Butler when he said, "The House Democracy is like a man riding backward in a carriage, it never sees a thing until it's by." That has not been the tale under the leadership of Mr. Underwood. His one session's work on Reciprocity, on the Farmers' Free List bill, on wool, show him to be politically faced the right way.

Forceful, concise, Mr. Underwood as a speaker pretends to no eloquence. He has no fire-fed moments. He prepares his speeches with care. He writes them, prunes them, pares them, rehearses them. He would no more speak without preparation than he would plunge wingless and reckless into an abyss. His life is quiet except so far as he disturbs it with his pilgrimages of politics. He is in no sense a ladies' man. He is not a flower of society. In dress he could not be called a dandy. Neither would he excite the cartoonist by any Greeleyan peculiarities of raiment. His garb is modest, of the moment, and of dark reserve. He seeks no notice for the clothes he wears. He is neither rich nor poor. Mrs. Underwood is the daughter of one of Birmingham's millionaires.

As the head of the Ways and Means Committee Mr. Underwood has shown himself to be the right man in the right place. What advances are made by the party in 1912 will be due largely to him. He knows tariff in all its schedule windings, as a man knows the hallways of his own house. He has wisdom. He has temper and spirit, but is neither unreasonable nor vindictive. I have faith in the tariff thoroughness of Mr. Underwood. If I owned the revenues of the government, I shouldn't hesitate to employ him as night-watchman.



An Idyl of Pelham Bay Park

By

Gouverneur Morris

*Author of "The Claws of the Tiger,"
"The Married Lovers," etc.*

"You don't have to drink it," said the young man. "I had some served because dinner doesn't look like dinner without champagne"

Illustrated by P. J. Monahan

We are too modest to say that we have all the best fiction writers as regular contributors to the *Cosmopolitan*. But we have most of them, and whenever a writer appears whose ability we consider eight feet and a half high we try to get him. So we are glad to tell you that Gouverneur Morris has joined the *Cosmopolitan's* "top-notchers." He will write a story a month, and the stories will be printed in each issue during the coming year. Mr. Morris knows New York as O. Henry did—and he is just such a master of short-story writing. This is a story of one of the little tragic episodes in the actual every-day life of the girl who works for a living in a big town like New York

"IT'S real country out there," Fannie Davis had said. "Buttercups and daisies. Come on, Lila! I won't go if you won't."

This sudden demonstration of friendship was too much for Lila. She forgot that she had no stylish dress for the occasion, or that her mother could not very well spare her for a whole day, and she promised to be ready at nine o'clock on the following Sunday morning.

"Fannie Davis," she explained to her mother, "has asked me to go out to Pelham Bay Park with her Sunday. And finally I said I would. I feel sometimes as if I'd blow up if I didn't get a breath of fresh air after all this hot spell."

She set her pretty mouth defiantly. She expected an argument. But her mother only shrugged her shoulders and said,

"We could make your blue dress look real nice with a few trimmings."

They discussed ways and means until long after the younger children were in bed and asleep.

By Saturday night the dress was ready, and Lila had turned her week's wages back into the coffers of the department-store where she worked, in exchange for a pair of near-silk brown stockings and a pair of stylish oxford ties of patent leather.

"You look like a show-girl," was Fannie's enthusiastic comment. "I wouldn't have believed it of you. Why, Lila, you're a regular little peach!"

Lila became crimson with joy.

They boarded the subway for Simpson Street. The atmosphere was hot and rancid. The two girls found standing-room only. Whenever the express curved they were thrown violently from one side of the car to the other. A young man who stood near them made a point on these occasions of laying a hand on Lila's waist to steady her. She didn't know whether it was proper to be angry or grateful.

"Don't pay any attention to him," said Fannie; "he's just trying to be fresh, and he doesn't know how."

An Idyl of Pelham Bay Park

She said it loud enough for the young man to hear. Lila was very much frightened.

They left the subway at Simpson Street, and boarded a jammed trolley-car for Westchester. Fannie paid all the fares.

"It's my treat," she said; "I'm flush. Gee, ain't it hot! I wish we'd brought our bathing-suits."

Much to Lila's relief the young man who had annoyed her was no longer visible. Fannie talked all the way to Westchester in so loud a voice that nearly everybody in the car could hear her. Lila was shocked and awed by her friend's showiness and indifference.

From Westchester they were to walk the two hot miles to the park. Already Lila's new shoes had blistered her feet. But she did not mention this. It was her own fault. She had deliberately bought shoes that were half a size too small.

In the main street of Westchester they prinked, smoothing each other's rumpled dresses, and straightening each other's peach-basket hats.

"Lila," said Fannie, "everybody's looking at you. I say you're *too* pretty. Lucky for me I've got my young man where I want him, or else you'd take him away from me."

"I would not!" exclaimed Lila, "and it's you they're looking at."

Fannie was delighted. "Do I look nice?" she wheedled.

"You look sweet!"

As a matter of fact, Fannie looked bold and handsome. Her clothes were too expensive for her station in life. Her mother suspected how she came by them, but was so afraid of actually knowing that she never brought the point to an issue; only sighed in secret and tried not to see, or understand.

Now and then motors passed through the crowds straggling to the park, and in exchange for gratuitous insults from small boys and girls left behind them long trails of thick dust and the choking smell of burnt gasoline. In the sun the mercury was at one hundred and twenty degrees.

"There's a hog for you," exclaimed Fannie. She indicated a stout man in shirt-sleeves. He had his coat over one arm, his collar and necktie protruding from the breast pocket. His wife, a meager woman, panted at his side. She carried two heavy children, one of them not yet born.

Half the people carried paper parcels or little suit-cases made of straw in which were bathing-suits and sandwiches. It would be low tide, but between floating islands of swill and sewage there would be water, salt, wet, and cool.

"My mother," said Fannie, "doesn't like me to come to these places alone. It's a real nice crowd uses Pelham Park, but there's always a sprinkling of freshies."

"Is that why you invited me?" said Lila gaily. Inwardly she flattered herself to think that she had been asked for herself alone. But Fannie's answer had in it something of a slap in the face.

"Well," said this one, "mother forbade me to come alone. But I do want to get better acquainted with you. Honest."

They rested for a while sitting on a stone wall in the shade of a tree.

"My mother," said Fannie grandly, "thinks everybody's rotten, including me. My God," she went on angrily, "do me and you work six days of the week only to be bossed about on the seventh? I tell you I won't stand it much longer. I'm going to cut loose. Nothing but work, work, work, and scold, scold, scold."

"If I had all the pretty things you've got," said Lila gently, "I don't believe I'd complain."

Fannie blushed. "It's hard work and skimping does it," she said. "Ever think of marrying, kid?"

Lila admitted that she had.

"Got a beau?"

Lila blushed and shook her head.

"You have, too. Own up. What's he like?"

Lila continued to deny and protest. But she enjoyed being teased upon such a subject.

"Well, if you haven't," said Fannie at last, "I have. It's a dead secret, kid. I wouldn't tell a soul but you. He's got heaps of money, and he's been after me—to marry him—for nearly a year."

"Do you like him?"

"I'm just crazy about him."

"Then why don't you marry him?"

"Well," Fannie temporized, "you never want to be in a rush about these things."

Fannie sighed, and was silent. She might have married the young man in question if she had played her cards better. And she knew it, now that it was too late, and there could not be a new deal. He had



DRAWN BY P. J. MOXHAM

"My God," said Fannie angrily, "do me and you work six days of the week only to be bossed about on the seventh? I tell you I won't stand it much longer. I'm going to cut loose"

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wanted her, even at the price of marriage. He was still fond of her. And he was very generous with his money. She met him whenever she could. He would be waiting for her now at the entrance to the park.

"He's got a motor-boat," she explained to Lila, "that he wants to show me. She's a cabin launch, almost new. You won't mind?"

"Mind? Are you going out for a sail with him, and leave me?"

"Well, the truth is," said Fannie, "I've just about made up my mind to say yes, and of course if there was a third party around, he couldn't bring the matter up, could he? We wouldn't be out long."

"Don't mind me," said Lila. Inwardly she was terribly hurt and disappointed. "I'll just sit in the shade and wish you joy."

"I wouldn't play it so low down on you," said Fannie, "only my whole future's mixed up in it. We'll be back in lots of time to eat."

Lila walked with them to the end of the pier at the bathing-beach. The water was full of people and rubbish. The former seemed to be enjoying themselves immensely and for the most part innocently, though now and then some young girl would shriek aloud in a sort of delighted terror, as her best young man, swimming under water, tugged suddenly at her bathing-skirt, or pinched the calf of her leg.

Lila watched Fannie and her young man embark in a tiny rowboat, and row out to a clumsy cabin catboat from which the mast had been removed and in whose cockpit a low-power, loud-popping motor had been installed. The young man started the motor, and presently his clumsy craft was dragging herself, like a crippled duck, down Pelham Bay toward the more open water of Long Island Sound.

Lila felt herself abandoned. She would have gone straight home but for the long walk to Westchester and the fact that she had no car-fare. She could have cried. The heat on the end of the dock and the glare from the water were intolerable. She was already faint with hunger, and her shoes pinched her so that she could hardly walk without whimpering. It seemed to her that she had never seen so many people at once. And in all the crowds she hadn't a single friend or acquaintance. Several men, seeing that she was without male escort, tried to get to know her; but gave up, dis-

couraged by her shy, frightened face. She was pretty, yes. But a doll. No sport in her. Such was their mental attitude.

"She might have left me the sandwiches," thought Lila. "Suppose the motor breaks down!"

Which was just what it was going to do—'way out there in the sound. It always did sooner or later when Fannie was on board. She seemed to have been born with an influence for evil over men and gas-engines.

At the other side of green lawns on which were a running-track, swings, trapezes, parallel bars, and a ball field, were woods. The shade, from where she was, looked black and cold. She walked slowly and timidly toward it. She could cool herself, and return in time to meet Fannie. But she returned sooner than she had expected.

She found a smooth stone in the woods and sat down. After the sun there was a certain coolness. She fanned herself with some leaves. They were poison ivy, but she did not know that. The perspiration dried on her face. There were curious whining, humming sounds in the woods. She began to scratch her ankles and wrists. Her ankles especially tickled and itched to the point of anguish. She was the delightful center of interest to a swarm of hungry mosquitoes. She leaped to her feet and fought them wildly with her branch of poison ivy. Then she started to run and almost stepped on a man who was lying face up in the under-wood, peacefully snoring. She screamed faintly and hurried on. Some of the bolder mosquitoes followed her into the sunlight, but it was too hot even for them, and one by one they dropped behind and returned to the woods. The drunken man continued his comfortable sleep. The mosquitoes did not trouble him. It is unknown why.

Lila returned to the end of the dock and saw far off a white speck that may or may not have been the motor-boat in which Fannie had gone for a "sail."

If there hadn't been so many people about, Lila must have sat down and cried. The warmth of affection which she had felt that morning for Fannie had changed into hatred. Three times she returned to the end of the dock.

All over the park were groups of people eating sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs. They shouted and joked. Under certain circumstances, not the least of sports is eating. Lila was so angry and hungry and

abused that she forgot her sore feet. She couldn't stay still. She must have walked—coming and going—a good many miles in all.

At last, exhausted as she had never been even after a day at the department-store during the Christmas rush, she found a deep niche between two rough rocks on the beach, over which the tide was now gently rising, and sank into it. The rocks and the sand between them gave out coolness; the sun shone on her head and shoulders, but with less than its meridianal fury. She could look down Pelham Bay and see most of the waters between Fort Schuyler and City Island. Boats of all sorts and descriptions came and went. But there was no sign of that in which Fannie had embarked.

Lila fell asleep. It became quiet in the park. The people were dragging themselves wearily home, disheveled, dirty, sour with sweat. The sun went down, copper-red and sullen. The trunks of trees showed ebony black against it, swarms of infinitesimal gnats rose from the beaches, and made life hideous to the stragglers still in the park.

Lila was awakened by the tide wetting her feet. She rose on stiff, aching legs. There was a kink in her back; one arm, against which she had rested heavily, was asleep.

"Fannie," Lila thought with a kind of falling despair, "must have come back, looked for me, given me up, and gone home."

In the midst of Pelham Bay a fire twinkled, burning low. It looked like a camp-fire deserted and dying in the center of a great open plain. Lila gave it no more than a somnambulant look. It told her nothing: no story of sudden frenzied terror, of in-



The young man shut off his motor, so that there was a sudden silence.
"Want a lift somewhere?" he asked cheerfully

extinguishable, unescapable flames, of young people in the midst of health, and the vain and wicked pursuit of happiness, half burned to death, half drowned. It told her no story of guilt providentially punished, or accidentally.

She had slept through all the shouting and screaming. The boats that had attempted rescue had withdrawn; there remained only the hull of a converted catboat, gasoline-soaked, burnt to the water's edge, a cinder—still smoldering.

Somewhere under the placid waters, gathering speed in the tidal currents, slowing down and swinging in the eddies, was all that remained of Fannie Davis, food for crabs, eels, dogfish, lobsters, and all the thousand and one scavengers of Atlantic bays, blackened shreds of garments still clinging to her.

II

NEXT to Pelham Bay Park toward the south is a handsome private property. On the low boundary wall of this, facing the road and directly under a ragged cherry-tree, Lila seated herself. She was "all in." She must wait until a vehicle of some sort passed, and beg for a lift. She was half starved; her feet could no longer carry her. A motor thrilled by at high speed, a fiery, stinking dragon in the night. Mosquitoes tormented her. She had no strength with which to oppose them. The hand in which she had held the poison ivy was beginning to itch and swell.

A second motor approached slowly, and came to a halt. A young man got out, opened one of the headlights, struck a match, and lighted it. Then he lighted the other. The low stone wall on which Lila sat and Lila herself were embraced by the ring of illumination. It must have been obvious to anyone but a fool that Lila was out of place in her surroundings; her peach-basket hat, the oxford ties of which she had been so proud, told a story of city breeding. Her face, innocent and childlike, was very touching.

The young man shut off his motor, so that there was a sudden silence. "Want a lift somewhere?" he asked cheerfully.

Lila could not remember when she had been too young to be warned against the advances of strange men. "They give you a high old time, and then they expect to be paid for it," had been so dinned into her that if she had given the young man a sharp "No" for an answer it would have been almost instinctive. Training and admonition rose strong within her. She felt that she was going to refuse help. The thought was intolerable. Wherefore, instead of answering, she burst into tears.

A moment later the young man was sitting by her side, and she was pouring her tale of a day gone wrong into amused but sympathetic ears.

His voice and choice of words belonged to a world into which she had never looked. She could not help trusting him and believing that he was good—even when he put his arm around her and let her finish her cry on his shoulder.

"And your friend left you—and you've got no car-fare, and you've had nothing to eat, and you can't walk any more because your shoes are too tight. And you live—?"

She told him.

"I could take you right home to your mother," he said, "but I won't. That would be a good ending to a day gone wrong, but not the best. Come."

He supported her to his motor, a high-power runabout, and helped her in. Never before had she sat in such reclining comfort. It was better than sitting up in bed.

"We'll send your mother a telegram from New Rochelle so that she won't worry," he said. "Just you let yourself go, and try to enjoy everything. Fortunately I know of a shoe-store in New Rochelle. It won't be open; but the proprietor has rooms above the store, and he'll be glad to make a sale even if it is Sunday. The first principle to be observed in a pleasant outing is a pair of comfortable feet."

"But I have no money," protested Lila.

"I have," said the young man; "too much, some people think."

Lila had been taught that if she accepted presents from young men she put herself more or less in their power.

They whirled noiselessly across Pelham Bridge. Lila had given up in the matter of accepting a present of shoes. In so doing she feared that she had committed herself definitely to the paths that lead to destruction. And when, having tried in vain to get a table at two inns between New Rochelle and Larchmont, the young man said that he would take her to his own home to dinner, she felt sure of it. But she was too tired to care, and in the padded seat, and the new easy shoes, too blissfully comfortable. They had sent her mother a telegram. The young man had composed it. He had told the mother not to worry. "I'm dining out and won't be home till late."

"We won't say how late," he had explained with an ingenuous smile, "because we don't know, do we?"

They had gone to a drug-store, and the clerk had bound a soothing dressing on Lila's poisoned hand.

They turned from the main road into a long avenue over which trees met in a continuous arch. The place was all a-twinkle with fireflies. Box, roses, and honeysuckle filled the air with delicious odors—then strong, pungent, bracing as wine, the smell of salt marshes, and coldness off the water. On a point of land among trees many lights glowed.

"That's my place," said the young man.

"We'll have dinner on the terrace—deep water comes right up to it. There's no wind to-night. The candles won't even flicker."

As if the stopping of the automobile had been a signal, the front door swung quietly open, and a Chinese butler in white linen appeared against a background of soft coloring and subdued lights.

As Lila entered the house, her knees shook a little. She felt that she was definitely committing herself to what she must always regret. She was a fly walking deliberately into a spider's parlor. That the young man hitherto had behaved most circumspectly, she dared not count in his favor. Was it not always so in the beginning? He seemed like a jolly, kindly boy. She had the impulse to scream, and to run out of the house, to hide in the shrubbery, to throw herself into the water. Her heart beat like that of a trapped bird. She heard the front door close behind her.

"I think you'd be more comfy," said the young man, "if you took off your hat, don't you? Dinner'll be ready in about ten minutes. Fong will show you where to go."

She followed the Chinaman up a flight of broad low steps. Their feet made no sound on the thick carpeting. He held open the door of a bedroom. It was all white and delicate and blue. Through a door at the farther end, she had a glimpse of white porcelain and shining nickel.

Her first act when the Chinaman had gone was to lock the door by which she had entered. Then she looked from each of the windows in turn. The terrace was beneath her, brick with a balustrade of white, with white urns. The young man, bareheaded, paced the terrace like a sentinel. He was smoking a cigarette.

To the left was a round table, set for two. She could see that the chairs were of

white wicker, with deep soft cushions. In the center of the table was a bowl of red roses. Four candles burned upright in massive silver candlesticks.

She took off her hat mechanically, washed her face and the hand that had not been bandaged, and "did" her hair. She looked wonderfully pretty in the big mirror over the dressing-table. The heavy ivory brushes looked enormous in her delicate hands. Her eyes were great and round like those of a startled deer.

She heard his voice calling to her from the terrace: "Hello, up there! Got everything



As Lila entered the house, her knees shook a little. She felt that she was definitely committing herself to what she must always regret

An Idyl of Pelham Bay Park

you want? Dinner's ready when you are."

She hesitated a long time with her hand on the door-key. But what was a locked door in an isolated house to a bad man? She drew a deep breath, turned the key, waited a little longer, and then, as a person steps into a very cold bath, pushed the door open, and went out.

He was waiting for her at the foot of the stairs. She went down slowly, her hand on the rail. She had no idea that she was making an exquisite picture. She knew only that she was frightened.

"It's turned cool," said the young man. He caught up a light scarf of Chinese embroidery, and laid it lightly about her shoulders. She looked him for the first time squarely in the face. She saw chiefly a pair of rather small, deep-set blue eyes; at the outer corners were multitudinous little wrinkles, dug by smiling. The eyes were clear as a child's, full of compassionate laughter.

A feeling of perfect security came over her. She thanked heaven that she had not made a ridiculous scene. The chimes of a tall clock broke the silence with music.

He offered her his arm, and she laid her fingers on it.

"I think we are served," he said, and led her to the terrace. He was solicitous about placing cushions to the best advantage for her. He took one from his own chair, and, on one knee, put it under her feet. He smiled at her across the bowl of roses.

"How old are you?" he said. "You look like a man's kid sister."

She told him that she was seventeen, and that she had worked for two years in a department-store.

"My father was a farmer," she said, "but he lost one arm, and couldn't make it pay. So we had to come to the city."

"Is your father living?"

"Yes. But he says he is dead. He can't find any work to do. Mother works like a horse, though, and so does Bert, and so do I. The others are at school."

"Do you like your work?"

"Only for what it brings in."

"What does it bring in?"

"Six dollars a week."

The young man smiled. "Never mind," he said; "eat your soup."

It did her good, that soup. It was strong and very hot. It put heart into her. When she had finished, he laughed gleefully.

"It's all very well to talk about rice-powder, and cucumber-cream, and beauty-sleeps, but all you needed to make you look perfectly lovely was a cup of soup. That scarf's becoming to you, too."

She blushed happily. She had lost all fear of him.

"What are you pinching yourself for?" he asked.

"To see if I'm awake."

"You are," he said, "wide awake. Take my word for it, and I hope you're having a good time."

The Chinaman poured something light and sparkling into her glass from a bottle dressed in a napkin. Misgivings returned to her. She had heard of girls being drugged.

"You don't have to drink it," said the young man. "I had some served because dinner doesn't look like dinner without champagne. Still, after the thoroughly unhappy day you've put in, I think a mouthful or two would do you good."

She lifted the glass of champagne, smiled, drank, and choked. He laughed at her, merrily.

All through dinner he kept lighting cigarettes and throwing them away. Between times he ate with great relish and heartiness.

Lila was in heaven. All her doubts and fears had vanished. She felt thoroughly at home, as if she had always been used to service and linen and silver and courtesies.

They had coffee, and then they strolled about in the moonlight, while the young man smoked a very long cigar.

He looked at his watch, and sighed. "Well, miss," he said, "if we're to get you safe home to your mother!"

"I won't be a minute," she said.

"You know the way?"

She ran up-stairs, and having put on her hat, decided that it looked cheap and vulgar, and took it off again.

He wrapped her in a soft white polo-coat for the long run to New York. She looked back at the lights of his house. Would she ever see them again, or smell the salt and the box and the roses?

By the time they had reached the Zoological Gardens at Fordham she had fallen

blissfully asleep. He ran the car with considerate slowness, and looked at her very often. She waked as they crossed the river. Her eyes shrank from the piled serried buildings of Manhattan. The air was no longer clean and delicious to the lungs.

"Have I been asleep?"

"Yes."

"Oh," she cried, "how could I! How could I! I've missed some of it. And it never happened before, and it will never happen again."

"Not in the same way, perhaps," he said gravely. "But how do you know? I think you are one girl in ten million, and to you all things are possible."

"How many men in ten million are like you?" she asked.

"Men are all pretty much alike," he said. "They have good impulses and bad."

In the stark darkness between the outer and the inner door of the tenement in which she lived, there was an awkward, troubled silence. He wished very much to kiss her, but had made up his mind that he would not. She thought that he might, and had made up her mind that if he attempted to, she would resist. She was not in the least afraid of him any more, but of herself.

He kissed her, and she did not resist.

"Good night," he said, and then with a half laugh, "Which is your bell?"

She found it and rang it. Presently there was a rusty click, and the inner door opened an inch or so. Neither of them spoke for a

full minute. Then she, her face aflame in the darkness:

"When you came I was only a little fool who'd bought a pair of shoes that were too tight for her. I didn't know any-

thing. I'm wise now. I know that I'm dreaming. And that if I wake up before the dream is ended, I shall die."

She tried to laugh gaily and could not.

"I've made things harder for you instead of easier," he said. "I'm terribly sorry. I meant well."

"Oh, it isn't that," she said. "Thank you a thousand thousand times. And good night."

"Wait," he said. "Will you play with me again some time? How about Saturday?"

"No," she said. "It wouldn't be fair—to me. Good night."

She passed through the inner door and up the narrow creaking stair to the dark tenement in which she lived; she could hear the restless breathing of her sleeping family.

"Oh, my God!" she thought, "if it weren't for *them*!"

As for the young man, having lighted

a long cigar, he entered his car and drove off, muttering to himself:

"Damnation! Why does a girl like that have a family!"

He never saw her again, nor was he ever haunted by the thought that he had perhaps spoiled her whole life as thoroughly as if he had taken advantage of her ignorance and her innocence.



She hesitated a long time with her hand on the door-key. But what was a locked door in an isolated house to a bad man?

The next story by Gouverneur Morris, "*The Man Who Played God*," will appear in the January issue.



Her father picked up his tattered dressing-gown from his bed, and wrapped her in it to the chin, then kissed her forehead. So she trotted away to Marche's door and tapped softly; and when he came and opened the door, she put her arms around his neck and kissed him

Blue-Bird Weather

Besides being the first novelist and story-writer in the country, Mr. Chambers knows more about hunting and fishing and the wonders of the wood and sea life of odd corners of the world than most experts. He was telling only the other day of finding just the conditions he describes in "Blue-Bird Weather" near one of his old stamping-grounds in the South—and the way he writes about them surely does make you want to have a try at some of those canvasbacks. That the hero of the story—a rich young New-Yorker—falls head over heels in love with the young lady who insists on acting as his bayman, helps make "Blue-Bird Weather" just the kind of story nobody but Robert W. Chambers can write. Read it and see if you don't think so

By Robert W. Chambers

Author of "The Common Law," "The Fighting Chance," "The Danger Mark," etc.

Illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson

III

BLUE-BIRD weather continued. Every day for a week Marche and Molly Herold put out for Foam Island under summer skies, and with a soft wind filling the sail; and in all the water-world there was no visible sign of winter, save the dead reeds on muddy islands and the far and wintry menace of the Atlantic crashing icily beyond the eastern dunes.

Few ducks and no geese or swans came to the blind. There was nothing for them to do except to talk together or sit dozing in the sun. And, imperceptibly, between them the elements of a pretty intimacy unfolded like spring buds on unfamiliar branches; but what they might develop into he did not know, and she had not even considered.

She had a quaint capacity for sleeping in the sunshine while he was away on the island prowling hopefully after black ducks. And one morning, when he returned to find her asleep at her post, a bunch of widgeon left the stools right under her nose before he had a chance to shoot.

She did not awake. The sun fell warmly upon her, searching the perfections of the childlike face and throat, gilding the palm of one little, sun-tanned hand lying, partly open, on her knee. A spring-like wind stirred a single strand of bright hair; lips slightly parted, she lay there, face to the sky, and Marche thought that he had never looked upon anything in all the world more pure and peaceful.

At noon the girl had not awakened. But something in John B. Marche had. He

looked in horrified surprise at the decoys, then looked at Molly Herold; then he gazed in profound astonishment at Uncle Dudley, who made a cryptic remark to the wife of his bosom, and then tipped upside down.

Marche examined the sky and water so carefully that he did not see them; then, sideways, and with an increasing sensation of consternation, he looked again at the sleeping girl.

His was not even a friendly gaze, now; there was more than dawning alarm in it—an irritated curiosity which grew more intense as the seconds throbbed out, absurdly timed by a most remarkable obligato from his heart.

He gazed stonily upon this stranger into whose life he had drifted only a week before, whose slumbers he felt that he was now unwarrantedly invading with a mental presumption that scared him; and yet, as often as he looked elsewhere, he looked back at her again, confused by the slowly dawning recognition of a fascination he was utterly powerless to check or even control.

One thing was already certain; he wanted to know her, to learn from her own lips intimately about her, about her thoughts, her desires, her tastes, her aspirations—even her lightest fancies.

Absorbed, charmed by her quiet breathing, fascinated into immobility, he sat there gazing at her, trying to reconcile the steadily strengthening desire to know her with what he already knew of her—of this sleeping stranger, this shabby child of a poor man, dressed in the boots and shooting-coat of that wretchedly poor man—his own super-

intendent, a sick man whom he had never even seen.

What manner of man could her father be—this man Herold—to have a child of this sort, this finely molded, fine-grained, delicate, exquisitely made girl, lying asleep here in a wind-stirred blind, with the Creator's own honest sun searching out and making triumphant a beauty such as his wise and city-worn eyes had never encountered, even under the mercies of softened candle-light.

An imbecile repetition of speech kept recurring and even stirring his lips, "She'd make them all look like thirty cents." And he colored painfully at the crudeness of his obsessing thoughts, angrily, after a moment, shaking them from him.

A cartridge rolled from the shelf and splashed into the pit-water; the girl unclosed her gray eyes, met his gaze, smiled dreamily; then, flushing a little, sat up straight.

"Fifteen widgeon went off when I returned to the blind," he said, unsmiling.

"I beg your pardon. I am—I am terribly sorry," she stammered, with a vivid blush of confusion.

But the first smile from her unclosing eyes had already done damage enough; the blush merely disorganized a little more what was already chaos in a young man's mind.

"Has—has anything else come in to the stools?" she asked timidly.

"No," he said, relenting.

But he was wrong. Something *had* come into the blind—a winged, fluttering thing, out of the empyrean—and even Uncle Dudley had not seen or heard it, and never a honk or a quack warned anybody, or heralded the unseen coming of the winged thing.

Marche sat staring out across the water.

"I—am so very sorry," repeated the girl in a low voice. "Are you offended with me?"

He turned and looked at her, and spoke steadily enough: "Of course I'm not. I was glad you had a nap. There has been nothing doing—except those stupid widgeon—not a feather stirring."

"Then you are not angry with me?"

"Why, you absurd girl!" he said, laughing and stretching out one hand to her.

Into her face flashed an exquisite smile; daintily she reached out and dropped her hand in his. They exchanged a friendly shake, still smiling.

"All the same," she said, "it was horrid

of me. And I think I boasted to you about my knowledge of a bayman's duties."

"You are all right," he said, "a clean shot, a thoroughbred. I ask no better comrade than you. I never again shall have such a comrade."

"But—I am your bayman, not your comrade," she exclaimed, forcing a little laugh. "You'll have better guides than I, Mr. Marche."

"Do you reject the equal alliance I offer, Miss Herold?"

"I?" She flushed. "It is very kind of you to put it that way. But I *am* only your guide—but it is pleasant to have you speak that way."

"What way?"

"The way you spoke about—your bayman's daughter."

He said, smilingly cool on the surface, but in a chaotic, almost idiotic inward condition: "I've sat here for days, wishing all the while that I might really know you. Would you care to let me, Miss Herold?"

"Know me?" she repeated. "I don't think I understand."

"Could you and your father and brother regard me as a guest—as a friend visiting the family?"

"Why?"

"Because," he said, "I'm the same kind of a man that you are a girl and that your brother is a boy. Why, you know it, don't you? I know it. I knew it as soon as I heard you speak, and when your brother came into the room that first night with his Latin book, and when I saw your mother's picture. So I know what your father must be. Am I not right?"

She lifted her proud little head and looked at him. "We are what you think us," she said.

"Then let us stand in that relation, Miss Herold. Will you?"

She looked at him, perplexed, gray eyes clear and thoughtful. "Do you mean that you really want me for a friend?" she asked calmly, but her sensitive lip quivered a little.

"Yes."

"Do men make personal friends among their employees? Do they? I ask because I don't know."

"What was your father before he came here?" he inquired bluntly.

She looked up, startled, then the color came slowly back to her cheeks. "Isn't that a little impertinent, Mr. Marche?"



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

They ate their luncheon in the blind together, he serving her with hot coffee, she plying him with sandwiches

"Good heavens! Yes, of course it is!" he exclaimed, turning very red. "Will you forgive me? I didn't mean to be rude or anything like it! I merely meant that whatever reverses have happened to bring such a girl as you down into this God-forsaken place have not altered what you were and what you are. *Can you forgive me?*"

"Yes. I'll tell you something. I *wanted* to be a little more significant to you than merely a paid guide. So did Jim. We—it is rather lonely for us. You are the first real man who has come into our lives in five years. Do you understand, Mr. Marche?"

"Of course I do."

"Are you sure you do? We would like to feel that we could talk to you—Jim would. It is pleasant to hear a man from the real world speaking. Not that the people here are unkind, only"—she looked up at him almost wistfully—"we *are* like you, Mr. Marche—and we feel starved, sometimes."

He did not trust himself to speak, even to look at her, just at the moment. Not heretofore sentimental, but always impressionable, he was young enough to understand, wise enough not to misunderstand.

After a while, leaning back in the blind, he began, almost casually, talking about things in that Northern world which had once been hers, assuming their common interest in matters purely local, in details of metropolitan affairs, in the changing physiognomy of the monstrous city, its superficial aspects, its complex phases.

Timidly, at first, she ventured a question now and then, and after a while, as her reserve melted, she asked more boldly, and even offered her own comments on men and things, so that, for the first time, he had a glimpse of her mind at work—brief, charming surprises, momentary views of a young girl's eager intelligence, visions of her sad and solitary self, more guessed at than revealed in anything she said or left unsaid.

And now they were talking together with free and unfeigned interest and pleasure, scarcely turning for a glance at the water or sky, save when old Uncle Dudley made insulting remarks to some slow-drifting gull or soaring bird of prey.

All the pent-up and natural enthusiasm of years was fairly bubbling to her lips; all the long-suppressed necessity of speech with one of her own kind who was not of her own kin.

It seemed as though they conversed and exchanged views on every topic which con-

cerned heaven and earth, flashing from one subject to another which had nothing at all to do with anything yet discussed.

Out around them the flat leagues of water turned glassy and calm as a mill-pond; the ducks and geese were asleep on their stools; even old Uncle Dudley stood sentinel, with one leg buried in the downy plumage of his belly, but his weather eye remained brilliantly open to any stir in the blue vault above.

They ate their luncheon there together, he serving her with hot coffee from the vacuum bottle, she plying him with sandwiches.

And now, to her beauty was added an adorable friendliness and confidence, free from the slightest taint of self-consciousness or the least blemish of coquetry. Intelligent, yet modest to the verge of shyness, eager yet reserved, warm hearted yet charmingly impersonal with him, he realized that she was finding, with him, only the happiness of speech with mankind in the abstract. And so she poured out to him her heart, long stifled in the abyss of her isolation; and, gazing into his eyes, she was gazing merely toward all that was bright and happy and youthful and responsive, and he was its symbol, God-sent from those busy haunts of men which already, to her, had become only memories of a blessed vision.

And all the while the undercurrent of his own thoughts ran on unceasingly: "What can I do for her? I am falling in love—in love, surely, hopelessly. What can I do for her—for her brother—her father? I am falling in love—in love—in love."

The long, still, sunny afternoon slipped away. Gradually the water turned to pearl, inlaid with gold, then with glowing rose. And now, far to the north, the first thrilling clangor of wild geese, high in the blue, came to their ears, and they shrank apart and lay back, staring upward. Nearer, nearer, came the sky-trumpets, answering faintly, each to each—nearer, nearer, till, high over the blind swept the misty wedge, and old Uncle Dudley flapped his wings and stretched his neck, calling up to his wild comrades of earthly delights unnumbered here under the shadow of death. And every wild goose answered him, and the decoys flapped and clamored a siren welcome; but the flying wedge glided onward through the blue.

"They've begun to move," whispered the girl. "But, oh, dear! It is blue-bird •

weather. Hark! Do you hear the swans? I can hear swans coming out of the north!"

Marche could not yet hear them, but the tethered swans and geese heard, and a magnificent chorus rose from the water. Then, far away as fairyland, faint in the sky, came a new murmur—not the martial clangor of wild geese, but something wilder, more exquisitely unearthly—nearer, nearer, enrapturing in its weird, celestial beauty. And now, through the blue, with great, snowy wings slowly beating, the swans passed over like angels; and like angels passing, hailing each other as they winged their way, drifting on broad, white pinions, they called, each to the other in their sweet, unreal voices, gossiping, garrulous, high in the sky. And far away they floated on until they became only a silver ribbon undulating against the azure; and even then Marche could hear the soft tumult of their calling: Heu! Heu! Hiou! Hiou-oo! until sound and snowy flecks vanished together in mid-heaven.

Again, coming from the far north, the trumpets of the sky-squadron were sounding; they passed, wedge after wedge, sometimes in steady formation, sometimes like a wavering band of witches, and again in shifting battalions, sternly officered, passing through intricate aerial maneuvers, and greeted by Uncle Dudley and the other decoys with wild beseeching mixed with applause.

Snowy, angelic companies of swans came alternately with the geese; then a whimpering, whispering flight of wild ducks, waterfowl in thousands and tens of thousands, rushing onward through the aerial lanes.

But none came to the blind. Occasionally a wedge of geese wavered, irresolute at the frantic persuasions of Uncle Dudley, but their leader always dragged them back to their course, and the sagging, hesitating ranks passed on.

Sometimes, in a nearer flight of swans, some long-necked, snowy creature would bend its head to look curiously down at the tethered swans on the water, but always they continued on, settling some two miles south off Foaming Shoals, until there was half a mile of wild swans afloat there, looking like a long, low bank of snow, touched with faintest pink by the glow of the westering sun.

IV

MARCHE, pacing the shabby sitting-room after supper, an unlighted cigarette between

his fingers, listened to Jim recite his Latin lesson.

"*Atque ea qui ad efeminandos animos pertinent important*," repeated the boy; and Marche nodded absently.

"Do you understand what that means, Jim?"

"Not exactly, sir."

Marche explained, then added smilingly: "But there is nothing luxurious to corrupt manhood among the coast marshes down here. Barring fever and moccasins, Jim, you ought to emerge, some day, into the larger world equipped for trouble."

"I shall go out some day," said the boy.

Marche glanced up at the portrait of the boy's mother in its pale-gilt oval. Near it, another nail had been driven, and on the faded wall-paper was an oval discoloration, as though another picture had once hung there.

"I wish I might see your father before I go North," said Marche, half to himself. "Isn't he well enough to let me talk to him for a few minutes?"

"I will ask him," said the boy.

Marche paced the ragged carpet until the return of Jimmy.

"Father is sorry, and asks you to please excuse him," he said.

Marche had picked up the boy's school-book and was looking at the writing on the fly-leaf again. Then he raised his head, eyes narrowing on the boy as though searching for some elusive memory connected with him—with his name in the Latin book—perhaps with the writing, which, somehow, had stirred in him, once more, the same odd and uncomfortable sensation which he had experienced when he first saw it.

"Jim," he said, "where did you live when you lived in New York?"

"In Eighty-seventh Street."

"West?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you remember the house—the number?"

"No, sir."

"Was it a private house?"

"I don't know. It was very tall. We lived on one floor and used an elevator."

"I see. It was an apartment house."

The boy stood, with blond head lowered, silently turning over the leaves of an old magazine.

Marche walked out to the porch; his brows were bent slightly inward, and he bit

the end of his unlighted cigarette until the thing became, useless. Then he flung it away. A few stars watched him above the black ramparts of the pines; a gentle wind was abroad, bringing inland the restless voice of the sea.

In Marche's mind a persistent thought was groping in darkness, vainly striving to touch and awaken memories of things forgotten. What was it he was trying to remember? What manner of episode, and how connected with this place, with the boy's book, with the portrait of his mother in its oval frame? Had he seen that portrait before? Perhaps he had seen it here, five years ago; yet that could not be, because Herold had not been here then.

Was it the writing on the fly-leaf that had stirred some forgotten memory? It had seemed to him familiar, somehow—yet not like the handwriting in Herold's business letters to him. Yet it was Herold's writing—"Jim, from Daddy"—that was the inscription. And that inscription had riveted his attention from the first moment he saw it.

Who was Herold? Who was this man whose undoubtable breeding and personal cultivation had stamped his children with the same unmistakable distinction?

Somehow or other there had been a great fall in the world for him—a terrible tumble from higher estate to land him here in this desolation of swamp-bound silence—here where only the dark pines broke the vast sky-line, where the only sound was the far rumor of the sea. Sick, probably with coast fever, poor, dependent, no doubt, on the salary Marche paid him, isolated from all in the world that made the world endurable to intelligence, responsible for two growing children—one already a woman—what must be the thoughts of such a man on a night like this, for instance?

"I want to see that man," he kept repeating to himself. "I want to see him; and I'm going to."

Restless, but now always listening for the sound of a light tread which he had come to know so well—alas!—he began to walk to and fro, with keen glances toward the illuminated kitchen-window every time he passed it. Sometimes his mind was chaotic; sometimes clear. The emotions which had awakened in him within the week were complex enough to stagger a more intelligent man. And Marche was not a fool; he was the typical product of his environment—the result of

school and college, and a New York business life carried on in keenest competition with men as remorseless in business as the social code permitted. Also, he went to church on Sundays, read a Republican newspaper, and belonged to several unexceptionable clubs.

That was the kind of a man he had been only a week ago—a good fellow in the usual sense among men, acceptable to women, kind hearted, not too cynical, and every idea in his head modeled upon the opinions he heard expressed in that limited area wherein he had been born and bred.

That was the kind of a man he had been a week ago. What was he now—to-night—here in this waste corner of the world with the light from a kitchen window blazing on him as though it were the flashing splendor streaming through the barred portals of paradise? Was it possible that he, John Benton Marche, could be actually in love—in love with the daughter of his own game-warden—with a girl who served him at supper in apron and gingham, who served him further in hip-boots and ragged jacket—this modern Rosalind of the marshes, as fresh and innocent, as modest and ardent, as she of the Arden glades?

The kitchen door opened, and Molly Herold came down the steps and straight toward him, unthinkingly, almost instinctively, laying her hands in his as he met her under the leafless China-tree in the yard.

"I was longer than usual to-night," she said, "trying to soften my hands with that cold cream you so kindly sent for." She lifted them in the starlight with a little laugh. "They're a trifle better, I think," she said, "but they're always in water, you know, either there," she glanced around at the kitchen, "or yonder with the decoys. But thank you all the same," she added brightly. "Are we going to have another delightful talk, now?"

"Do you care to?"

"Of course. The idea of my not caring to talk to you," she said, laughing at the absurdity. "Shall we go into the sitting-room, or walk in the starlight? There are no snakes out, yet," she assured him, "though if this weather holds, the moccasins will come out."

"We'll walk down to the shore," he said.

"One moment, then." She turned and sped to the house, reappearing, after a few minutes, wearing her ragged shooting-coat.

"Is your father comfortable?" he asked.



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

Marche had picked up the boy's school-book and was looking at the writing on the fly-leaf again.

"Jim," he said, "where did you live when you lived in New York?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Do you think he might want you?"

"No. Jim sleeps next to him, and he is preparing for bed, now." She smiled. "What a darling my brother is, isn't he, Mr. Marche?"

"He's a fine boy."

They moved on together, down the rutted lane, between dismantled fences and ragged,

leafless hedges. She was lithe and light and sure footed, but once or twice, as they skirted puddles, he supported her; and the touch of his hand on her body almost unnerved him. Never had he dreamed that contact with any woman could so thrill, so exquisitely shock. And every instant he was falling deeper and deeper in love with her. He knew it—realized it—made no

effort to avoid it, fight it off, control it. It was only his speech and manner that he held desperately under bit and curb, letting his heart go to everlasting smash and his reason run riot. And what on earth would be the end he could not imagine, for he was leaving for the North in the morning, and he had not yet told her.

As they came out upon the shore, the dory loomed up, beached, a dark silhouette against the starlit water. She laid her hands on the stern and vaulted lightly to her perch, sliding along to make room for Marche.

From far away in the sound came the confused murmur of wild fowl feeding. Except for that, and the ceaseless monotone of the outer sea, there was no sound, not even the lap of water against the bow.

Marche, who had been leaning forward, head bent as though watching the water, turned to the girl abruptly. "I want to do something for—Jim," he said.

The girl looked up at him, not understanding.

"Will your father let me?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"I mean that I want to send him to a good school—a good boys' school in the North."

She caught her breath, was silent for a moment, then, amazed: "*Would* you do that? Oh, I've wished for it—dreamed of it! But—how can you? You are so kind—so good to us—but how could we—accept?"

"That's why I want to see your father."

"For *that*? Was it really for that, Mr. Marche?"

"Yes—partly." He swallowed and looked the other way, for the girl's excited face was very near his own as she bent forward to search his eyes for the least change of expression—bent nearer as though to reassure herself that he meant it seriously. For an instant her soft breath made the night air fragrant; he felt it, faint and fresh on his cheek, and turned sharply, biting his lips lest he lose all self-control.

"Could you and your father spare him?" he asked carelessly.

"Oh, if you only would give him that chance!" she cried. "But—tell me—*how* can we accept such a thing of you? Is it possible?"

"Would *you* accept it?" he asked, turning toward her.

The question startled her. She looked at him, striving to think clearly, trying to see

this offered miracle through calm, impartial eyes.

"I—I would do anything—almost—for Jim," she said. "I'd have no pride left, if his chances lay in the balance. But men—my father—may be different."

He said slowly, "Suppose I offered the same chance to you?"

"What!" she said crisply.

"Suppose I offered you a college finishing, Miss Herold. Would you accept?"

She slowly grew scarlet under his gaze. "That would be insulting," she said, in a low voice.

"Why, when only kindness is meant—as I mean it for Jim?"

"It is not the same. I am a grown woman capable of caring for myself. Such an offer, however kindly meant, could only hurt me, humiliate me—and—I thought you found me companionable as I am. Friends do not offer to better each other—in such a way."

"I have not offered it to you, Miss Herold."

She looked up, still flushed and brilliant eyed; then her face changed softly. "I know it. I was foolishly sensitive. I know you couldn't offer such a thing to me. But I wish I knew whether we could accept for Jim. He is such a darling—so intelligent and perfectly crazy for an education. I've saved a little—that's why I wanted you to hire me for your bayman. You see I don't spend anything on myself," she added, with a blush.

Marche was fighting hard for self-restraint: he was young and romantic, and his heart was very full. "What I'd like to do," he said, "would be to send Jim to some first-rate school until he was ready for college. Then I'd like to see him through college, and, if he cared for it, start him with me in business."

"Oh," she cried softly, "is it possible! Is there—can any man really do such heavenly things? Have you any idea what you are saying? Do you realize what you are doing to me—with every word you utter?"

"What am I doing to—to you?" he asked unsteadily.

"Making me your slave," she said, in a low voice, thrilling with generous passion. "Even for the thought—even if father will not accept—what you have said to me to-night has put me in your debt forever. Truly—truly, I know what friendship is, now."

She clasped her hands tightly and said something else, sweetly incoherent; and, in the starlight, Marche saw the tears sparkling on her lashes.

With that he sprang nervously to the shore and began to tramp up and down the shingle, his mind in a whirl, every sense, common or the contrary, clamoring for finality—urging him to tell her the truth—tell her that he loved her, that he wanted her—her alone, out of all the world of women—that it was for love and for her, and for love of her, that he offered anything, did anything, thought anything now under the high stars or under the circling sun.

And now, as he tramped savagely to and fro, he realized that he had begun wrong; that he should have told her he loved her first of all, and then acted, not promised.

Would she look on his offer scornfully, now? Would she see, in what he asked of her, a bribe desired for the offer he had made in her brother's behalf? She did not love him. How could she, in a week? Never had there been even a hint of sentiment between them. What would she think—this young girl, so tranquilly confident in her friendship for him—what would she think of him and his love? He knew there was nothing mercenary or material in her character; he knew she was young, sweet tempered, reticent concerning herself, clean hearted, and proud. How could he come blundering through the boundaries of her friendship with such an avowal, at a moment's notice?

He returned slowly to the boat and stood looking up at her; and he saw that she was smiling down at him in the starlight.

"Why did you start off so abruptly and tramp up and down?" she asked.

He looked up at her. "Shall we walk back, now?" he said.

She extended her hands to him, and he swung her to the beach. For a moment, he retained her hands; she looked at him, smiling, thrilling with all that he had said, meeting his eyes frankly and tenderly.

"You are like some glorious magic prince to me," she said, "appearing among us here to win our hearts with a word."

"Have I won yours with what I have said?"

"Mine? Oh, don't you know it? Do you think—even if it doesn't come true—that I can ever forget what you have wished to do for Jim?"

Still holding her hands, he lifted them, joined her fingers, and laid his lips to them. She bent her head and caught her breath in surprise.

"I am going North to-morrow," he said.

For a moment, she did not comprehend his words. Then, a trifle dazed, she looked up at him. "To-morrow?"

"Yes."

"Are you coming back?"

"Perhaps—next year."

"Next-year!"

"Do you—find it—a long time?"

Her straight brows bent inward a little, the startled gray eyes became clear and steady. "Of course I knew that you must go—some time. But I had no idea that it would be so soon. Somehow, I have thought of you as being—here—"

"Do you care?"

Her honest eyes widened. "Care?" she repeated.

"Yes. How greatly do you care?"

The straight brows contracted still more as she stood considering him—so close that the fresh and subtle youth of her freshened the night again with its faint perfume.

Again he touched her hands with his lips, she watching him palely, out of clear, gray eyes; then, as they turned away together, he encircled her slender waist with his arm.

That she was conscious of it, and not disturbed by it, was part of her new mystery to him. Only once, as they walked, when his circling clasp tightened, did she rest her own hand over his where it held her body imprisoned. But she said nothing; nor had he spoken when the belt of pines loomed against the stars once more.

Then, though neither had spoken, they stopped. He turned to face her, drew her into his arms, and the beating of his heart almost suffocated him as he looked into her eyes, clear, unshrinking eyes of gray, with a child's question in their starry depths.

And he answered the question as in a dream: "I love you. I want you for my wife. I want you to love me. You are the first woman I have cared for. All that you are I want—no more than you are. You, as you are now, are all that I care for in the world. Life is young for us both, yet. Let us grow up together—if you can love me. Can you?"

"I don't know."

"Can you not care for me a little, Molly?"

"I do. I know—nothing about—love—real love."

"Can you not imagine it, dear?"

"I—it is what I *have* imagined—a man—like you—coming this way into my loneliness. I recognize it. I have dreamed that it was like this. What is it that I should do—if this is really to come true?"

"Love me."

"I would—if I knew how. I don't know how," she said wistfully. "My heart is so full—already—of your goodness—I—and then this dream I have dreamed—that a man like you should come here and say this to me—"

"Is it in you to love me?"

"I'll try—if you'll tell me what to do—how to show it—to understand—"

He drew her closer, unresisting, and looked deep into her young eyes, and kissed them, and then her lips, till they grew warmer and her breath came fragrant and uneven.

"Can you love me?"

"Yes," she whispered.

"Are you sure?"

"Y-yes."

For a moment's exquisite silence she rested her flushed face against his shoulder, then lifted it, averted, and stepped aside, out of the circle of his arms. Head lowered, she stood there, motionless in the starlight, arms hanging straight; then, as he came to her, she lifted her proud little head and laid both her hands in his.

"Of those things," she said, "that a woman should be to the man she loves, and say to that man, I am ignorant. Even how to speak to you—now—I do not know. It is all a dream to me—except that, in my heart, I know that I do love you. But I think that was so from the beginning, and after you had gone away I should have realized it some day."

"You darling!" he whispered. Again she surrendered to him, exquisite in her ignorance, passive at first, then tremulously responsive. And at last her head drooped and fell on his shoulder, and he held her for a little longer, then released her.

Trembling, she crept up the stairway to her room, treading lightly along the dark entry, dazed, fatigued, with the wonder of it all. Then, as she laid her hand on the knob of her bedroom door, the door of her father's room opened abruptly.

"Molly?"

"Yes, dear," she answered vaguely.

He stood staring at her on the threshold, fully dressed, and she looked back at him, her eyes slightly confused by the light.

"Where have you been?" he said.

"With Mr. Marche."

"Where?"

"To the dory—and back."

"What did he say to you, child?"

She came silently across the threshold and put her arms around his neck; and the man lost every atom of his color.

"What did he say?" he repeated harshly.

"That he loves me."

"What!"

"It is true, father."

The man held her at arm's length roughly. "Good God!" he groaned, "how long has this been going on?"

"Only to-night. What do you mean, father?"

"He told you that he—he was in love with you? With *you*?" repeated Herold unsteadily.

"Yes. It is true, too."

"You mean he asked you to marry him!"

"Yes. And I said I would."

"*You love him!*"

The man's pallor frightened her silent. Then he dropped her arms, which he had been clutching, and stood staring at nothing, gnawing at his colorless lips.

The girl watched him with dawning terror and finally ventured to speak. "Dear, what is the matter? Are you displeased with me? Do you think that he is not a man I should care for? You don't know him, dear. You have only to see him, to speak with him, hear his voice, look into his eyes—"

"Good God!" groaned Herold, closing his sunken eyes. Then, almost feeling his way out and along the dark passageway, he descended the stairs, heavily.

Marche, cleaning his gun in the sitting-room, looked up in surprise, then rose, laying aside stock, fore end, and barrel, as Herold came into the room. The next instant, stepping nearer, he stared into Herold's face in silence. And so they met and confronted each other after many years.

"Are *you* Herold?" said the young man, in a low voice.

"That is my name—now."

"*You* have been in my employment—for five years?"

"Yes. Judge Gilkins gave me the chance. I could not suppose that the club would ever become your property."



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

The man held her at arm's length roughly. "He told you that he—he was in love with you?
With you?" repeated Herold unsteadily

The younger man's face hardened. "But when it did become my property, why had you the indecency to stay?"

"Where else could I go?"

"You had the whole world to—operate in."

Herold's thin face flushed. "It was fitter that I should work for you," he said. "I have served you faithfully for five years."

"And unfaithfully for ten! Wasn't it enough that Vyse and I let you go without prosecuting you? Wasn't it enough that we pocketed our loss for your wife's sake?"

He checked himself in a flash of memory, turned, and looked at the picture on the wall. Now he knew, now he understood, why his former associate's handwriting had seemed familiar after all these years.

And suddenly he remembered that this man was Jim's father—and the father of the young girl he was in love with; and the shock drove every drop of blood out of his heart and cheeks. Ghostly, staring, he stood confronting Herold; and the latter, leaning heavily, shoulder against the wall, stared back at him.

"I could have gone on working for you," he said, "trying to save enough to make restitution—some day. I *have* already saved part of it. Look at me—look at my children—at the way we live, and you'll understand how I have saved. But I *have* saved part of what I took. I'll give you that much before you go—before I go, too."

His breath came heavily, unevenly; he cleared his eyes with a work-stained hand, fashioned for pens and ledgers.

"You were abroad when I—did what I did. Vyse was merciless. I told him I could put it back if he'd give me the chance. But a thief was a thief to him—particularly when his own pocket was involved. He meant to send me to prison. The judge held him—he was his father-in-law—and he was an old man with a wife and children of his own."

Herold was silent for a moment, and his gaze became vague and remote, then he lifted his head sharply.

"A man makes one slip like that and the world damns him forever. And I tell you, Marche, that I am not dishonest by nature or in my character. God alone knows why I took those securities, meaning, of course, to return them, as all the poor, damned fools do mean when they do what I did. But Vyse made it a condition that I was to leave the country, and there was no chance

of restitution unless I could remain in New York and do what I knew how to do—no chance, Marche—and so fortune ebbed, and my wife died, and the old judge saw me working on the water-front in Norfolk one day, and gave me this place. That is all."

"Why did you feign illness?" asked Marche, in an altered voice.

"You know why."

"You thought I'd discharge you?"

"Of course."

Marche stepped nearer. "Why did you come to me here to-night?"

Herold flushed deeply. "It was your right to know—and my daughter's right—before she broke her heart."

"I see. You naturally suppose that I would scarcely care to marry the daughter of a—" He stopped short, and Herold set his teeth.

"Say it," he said, "and let this end matters for all of us. Except that I have saved seven thousand dollars toward—what I took. I will draw you a check for it now."

He walked steadily to the table, laid out a thin check-book, and with his fountain-pen wrote out a check for seven thousand dollars on a Norfolk bank.

"There you are, Marche," he said wearily. "I made most of it buying and selling pine timber in this district. It seemed a little like expiation, too, working here for you, unknown to you. I won't stay, now, of course. I'll try to pay back the rest—little by little—somehow."

"The way to pay it back," said Marche, "is to do the work you are fitted for."

Herold looked up. "How can I?"

"Why not?"

"I could not go back to New York. I have no money to go with, even if I could find a place for myself again."

"Your place is open to you."

Herold stared at him.

Marche repeated the assertion profanely. "Damnation," he said, "if you'd talked this way to me five years ago, I'd never have stood in your way. All I heard of the matter was what Vyse told me. I'm not associated with him any more; I'll stand for his minding his own affairs. The thing for you to do, Courtney, is to get into the game again and clean up what you owe Vyse. Here's seven thousand; you can borrow the rest from me. And then we'll go into things again and hustle. It was a good combination, Courtney—we'd have been rich men—

except for the slip you made. Come on in with me again. Or would you rather continue to inhabit your own private hell?"

"Do you know what you are saying, Marche?" said the other hoarsely.

"Sure, I do. I guess you've done full time for a first offense. Clean off the slate, Courtney. You and Vyse and I know it—nobody else—Gilkins is dead. Come on, man! That boy of yours is a corker! I love him—that little brother, Jim, of mine; and as for—Molly—" His voice broke and he turned sharply aside, saying: "It's certainly blue-bird weather, Courtney, and we all might as well go North. Come out under the stars, and we'll talk it over."

It was almost dawn when they returned. Marche's hand lay lightly on Courtney's shoulder for a moment, as they parted.

Above, as Courtney stood feeling blindly for his door, Molly's door swung softly ajar, and the girl came out in her night-dress.

"Father," she whispered, "is it all right?"

"All right, thank God, little daughter."

"And—I may care for him?"

"Surely—surely, darling, because he is the finest specimen of manhood that walks this merciless earth."

"I knew it," she whispered gaily. "If you'll lend me your wrapper a moment, I'll go to his door and say good night to him again."

Her father looked at her, picked up his tattered dressing-gown from his bed, and wrapped her in it to the chin, then kissed her forehead.

So she trotted away to Marche's door and tapped softly; and when he came and opened the door, she put her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Good night," she whispered. "I do love you, and I shall pray all night that I may be everything that you would wish to have me. Good night, once more—dearest of men—good night."

Will You?

Do you realize that the Cosmopolitan is within striking distance of the million mark? Even now, no other general magazine has nearly as large a circulation.

But we are not satisfied. Frankly, we want the million.

The more readers we have, the more big, expensive, interesting features we can afford to buy—the better magazine we can make for you.

*And if each one of our big family of Cosmopolitan readers would merely tell **one** friend how good the magazine is, or, better yet, lend a copy, we should have our million.*

Will you?

In Coonville

By E. W. Kemble



"Wish Ah was white. Den Ah'd feel lak Ah was somebody."



"Sweet Angel Gab'l! Wh-wh—what's happenin'?"



"'Deed Ah doan' want ter be white. What you-all gwine ter do?"



"Now jes go easy. Dat's sufficient. Sometimes—"



"—a worm will turn."



"An' 's dat partickler worm."

The Story-Tellers

Sallies and Smiles from

CURTIS GUILD, former governor of Massachusetts, was once asked for the funniest story he ever heard. This is the story he told:

"An Irishman and a Jew were discussing the great men who had belonged to each race and, as may be expected, got into a heated argument. Finally the Irishman said:

"Ikey, listen. For ivery great Jew ye can name ye may pull out one of me whiskers, an' for ivery great Irishman I can name I'll pull one of yours. Is it a go?"

"They consented, and Pat reached over, got hold of a whisker, said, 'Robert Emmet,' and pulled.

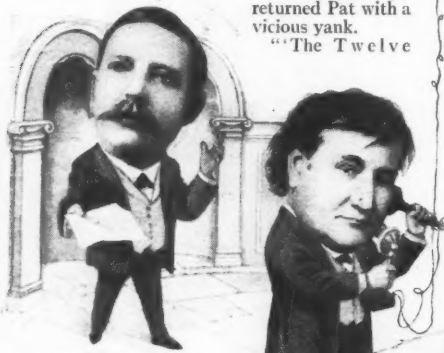
"Moses!" said the Jew, and pulled one of Pat's tenderest.

"Dan O'Connell," said Pat and took another.

"Abraham," said Ikey, helping himself again.

"Patrick Henry," returned Pat with a vicious yank.

"The Twelve



CURTIS GUILD, JR.

Apostles," said the Jew, taking a handful of whiskers.

Pat emitted a roar of pain, grasped the Jew's beard with both hands, and yelled, 'The Ancient Order of Hibernians!'"

OPIE READ, the big, genial novelist, storyteller, and ever-popular entertainer, was at a Chautauqua out West last summer, where, after his lecture, he met a fellow platformist and invited him to have a smoke.

"Come, H——," said Read, "get your pipe and let's get comfortable."

"No, thank you, Mr. Read, I don't smoke."

"What! don't smoke!" exclaimed Opie.

"No," declared the other, "I never smoke, chew, drink, nor swear."

"Great Caesar, man," cried Read, "I'm doing one of those things all the time!"

JUDGE RICHARD B. RUSSELL, of Georgia, is known in politics as "Plain Dick" Russell. On the recent election of Governor Hoke Smith to the United States Senate, Russell announced himself as a candidate for the soon-to-be-vacated executive office, for which he is now running with all his might

—which is saying a great deal. Besides being justice of the court of appeals, a well-known politician, and a prosperous farmer, Judge Russell is the proud father of fourteen children. Having twelve children already, and being superstitious by nature, he was unwilling to risk the unlucky thirteen, so his last two were twins.

On one occasion, Judge Russell took his fourteen children with him to a state fair, where, among other things, they were exhibiting a two-headed calf as a side attraction. Judge Russell cautiously inquired the price of tickets.

"Ten cents for whole and five cents for half tickets," explained the showman.

Brightening perceptibly, "Plain Dick" handed out the money. "Give me one whole and fourteen halves," he said.

The showman eyed him curiously. "Have you fourteen children?" he asked.

"I have that," replied the judge.

"Got 'em all wid yer?"

"Plain Dick" pointed proudly to the long row of human steps rising back of him. "There they are," he said; "count for yourself."

Lifting his finger, the showman counted one by one.

"Master," he said, "keep yer money. Suppose you sell me a ticket, and I'll bring the calf out to see you."



E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

M. R. OPPENHEIM, the novelist, is very fond of lobster. During a recent visit to New York he was seen every night bending his keen visage over the great scarlet shells and extracting the snowy meat.

One night his waiter brought him a lobster that lacked a claw.

"I say, waiter," he complained, "there's a claw missing here."

"Yes, sir," answered the waiter; "two fellows got into a fight down-stairs, and this one lost a flipper."

Pushing back his plate, Mr. Oppenheim commanded, "Take him away and bring me the winner!"

GEORGE EASTMAN, the inventor of the kodak, is responsible for this story:

"I was sitting in a drug-store waiting to get a prescription filled, when a young Irishman entered. He pointed to a stack of green castile soap, and said,

"Oi want a loomp o' thot."

"Very well, sir," said the clerk, "Will you have it scented or unscented?"

"O'i'll take ut with me," said the Irishman."



R. B. RUSSELL

Hall of Fun

People Worth While

WOODROW WILSON was speaking at a dinner in Trenton. "A statesman," said he, "according to the old-fashioned creed, must never



WOODROW WILSON

change his mind. A changed mind may indicate a splendid mental development, but the old-fashioned are sure to call it inconsistency, and they are sure to come back at the inconsistent statesman as tellingly as the old parishioner came back at his pastor.

"A certain young pastor announced nervously one morning, 'I will take for my text the words, 'And they fed five people with five thousand loaves of bread and two thousand fishes.'"

"At this misquotation the old parishioner, from his seat in the amen corner, said audibly, 'That's no miracle—I could do it myself.'"

"The young preacher said nothing at the time, but the next Sunday he announced the same text. This time he got it right, 'And they fed five thousand people on five loaves of bread and two fishes.'"

"He waited a moment, and then, leaning over the pulpit and looking at the amen corner, he said, 'And could you do that, too, Mr. Smith?'"

"Of course, I could," Mr. Smith replied.

"And how would you do it?" said the preacher.

"Why, with what was left over from last Sunday, of course," said Mr. Smith."

RABBI WISE, when he visited Boston for the first time, was undecided at what hotel to stop. As he wandered up Summer Street, from the South Station, he determined to inquire for a good hotel. So he accosted a fine-appearing man who was coming toward him, confident that from such a citizen he would be sure to get the very best advice as to his choice of a stopping-place.

"What would be a good place to stop at?" he inquired of the stranger.

"Just before you reach the at," was the disconcerting reply.

REPRESENTATIVE HENRY, of Texas, in an eloquent and caustic speech in the House last session, condemned the American heiress who marries, for the sake of his title, the nobleman ruined in health and prospects by dissipation.

Discussing this speech with a reporter, Mr. Henry said:

"I want to see our hale young girls marry hale young men. I want to see them all showing the

spirit of a girl I know in Waco. She was proposed to by a rich bachelor of fifty. And she refused him. Afterward, talking over the turn-down with a mutual friend, she said:

"Yes, I refused him. He has, you know, a past. He has a dreadful past."

"Oh, but," said the mutual friend, "a man can always blot out his past."

"Yes, that may be," replied this splendid Waco girl, "but he sha'n't use me for a blotter."

GOVERNOR FOSS, of Massachusetts, tells of a well-known divine who was visiting a state prison, when he came across a prisoner whose features were familiar to him. "What brought you here, my poor fellow?" he asked.

"You married me to a new woman a little while ago, sir," the prisoner replied, with a sigh.

"Ah, I see,"



EUGENE N. FOSS

said the parson; "and she was domineering and extravagant, and she drove you to desperate courses, eh?"

"No," said the prisoner, "my old woman turned up."

LAFAYETTE YOUNG, for a while senator from Iowa, is authority for the following account of an incident on a street-car in Des Moines.

The car was crowded, and mostly by women, who were bent on shopping. When all had been seated, the three or four men who indulged in the luxury of seats looked at one another as though to say, "We are next to get up." In fact, three women got on at the next stop, and a business man rose to offer his seat to one of them, who was young and very pretty.

"You are a jewel," the latter said, smiling as she thanked him.

"No, madam, I am a jeweler," he said. "I set jewels."

And now he is married to that lady.



STEPHEN S. WISE

Magazine Shop-Talk

Admiral Schley's Own Story

A MAN died the other day. And with his death passed America's most popular naval hero—popular because championed by the people, though officially denied the full fruits of his long and brilliant service. This Man was Admiral Schley, hero of Santiago, one of the great sea-fighters of history.

Shortly before his death Admiral Schley completed for the COSMOPOLITAN a series of articles giving his intimate recollections of his forty-five years in the navy. We have found that our readers are tremendously interested in the stories of the surviving heroes of the Civil War. By all the tests we could invent, the articles by General Miles were as popular a series as we ever printed. So we asked Admiral Schley to tell his story. He was not anxious to do this, for there was at least one old sore that an autobiography must reopen. But we urged upon him the fact that nearly four million readers would see each instalment of his story, and that most of these readers believed, with Dewey, that the man who stood on the deck of the *Brooklyn* that July Sunday in '98 was entitled to the glory of that great victory. So he consented to do it, not in the cut-and-dried way, but unlocking his secret soul as he had never done before. The first instalment of the autobiography, the life story of a man worth while in the nation's history, appears in this issue.

"When the Gods Nod"

WE don't often make mistakes. We require our special writers to verify to the most minute detail every statement they make. And apart from their proofs we spend thousands of dollars a year satisfying ourselves that not a misstatement of fact appears in the pages of the COSMOPOLITAN.

But occasionally even the gods nod, and we are convinced that there was a nod in a statement referring to Judge Blair of Adams County, Ohio, in the October issue. In this issue Mr. Creel and Mr. Gordon, in their article on vote-buying in Adams County, repeated a story told to them to the effect that Judge Blair in the early days

of his career claimed on one occasion to have been robbed by highwaymen of six hundred dollars which had been entrusted to him to be used in vote-buying. From a letter just received from Judge Blair, and from affidavits presented by him, we are convinced that on this occasion Judge Blair had no political funds in his custody, and therefore, in spite of the attack made upon him, no money was

secured, and no part of any of the fund mentioned could have been retained by Judge Blair. We believe that Judge Blair is entitled to the heartiest thanks of the voters of his county for cleaning up the shameful



Harrison Fisher in his studio.—Have you missed him on the cover lately? In January he will "come back"—under contract—to stay

system of vote-buying which has been in vogue there for nearly half a century.

Cosmopolitan and Dickens

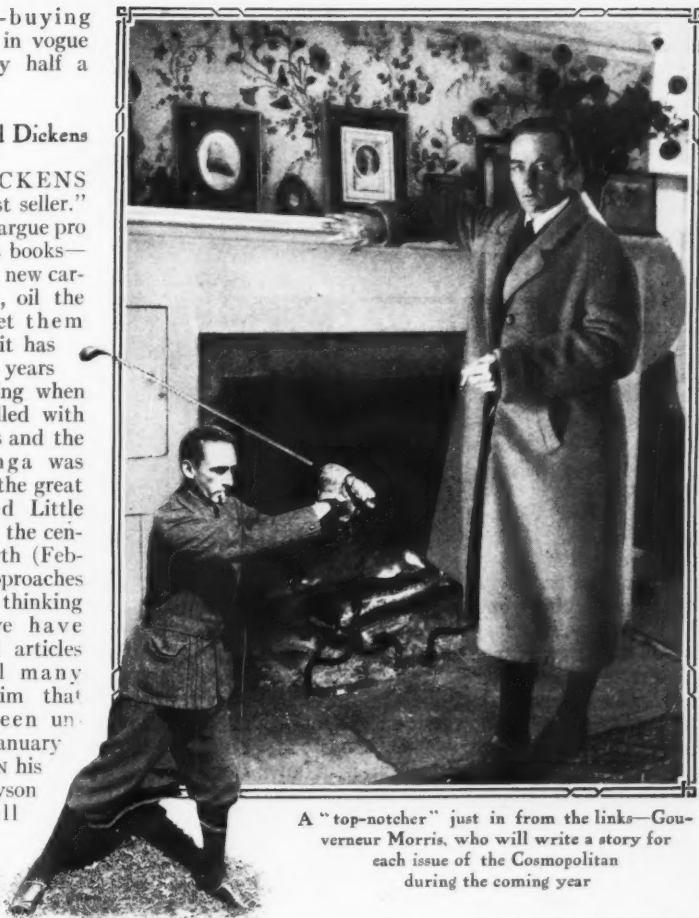
CHARLES DICKENS is still a "best seller."

Publishers don't argue pro and con over his books—they just order a new carload of paper, oil the presses, and let them speed on. And it has been over forty years since, one morning when the yard was filled with scarlet geraniums and the breath of syringa was heavy in the air, the great author followed Little Nell. Now that the centenary of his birth (February 7, 1812) approaches and everybody is thinking of Dickens, we have secured several articles which will tell many things about him that have hitherto been unknown. In the January **COSMOPOLITAN** his son, Alfred Tennyson Dickens, will tell you some of his own personal recollections of the great novelist.

Later, probably in February, Mary Angela Dickens, his granddaughter, will give an intimate view of Dickens as she remembers him. In fact, in these and other articles on Dickens which will follow—fully illustrated, of course—we shall aim to give you a more vivid picture than has yet been published of the human—the home—side of the great master, written by those who knew him best. Read the articles—they will surely arouse a new interest in the "best beloved" author in your library.

The Way of an Octopus

YOU know the way of an octopus—cut the tip of a tentacle and the rest of it wriggles, digs in, and grips harder. For



A "top-notcher" just in from the links—Gouverneur Morris, who will write a story for each issue of the *Cosmopolitan* during the coming year

years the federal authorities have been cutting little tentacle-tips from the Lumber Trust. Annoying to the trust? Unquestionably. But not vital to the grip. **WE ARE AFTER THE GRIP.** Charles Edward Russell has made for the *COSMOPOLITAN* a thorough investigation of Lumber Trust methods—he has followed the slippery trail of the Lumber octopus literally from coast to coast—and he has the "goods." You will be surprised at his revelations—at the tremendous power of the trust, its brazen indifference to all but its own interests, its hold upon legislators, its highway methods of national pocket-picking. It will be a great series of articles—vitally interesting to everyone who has ever bought any part of a tree. The first

article will appear in the February issue on the news-stands January 10th.

The Number of Our Friends

NEARLY

800,000 of you have bought this issue of the COSMOPOLITAN, or will buy it before the month is out. And thereby hangs the most encouragement we have had in a long time. It means that you are pleased with the kind of

magazine we are giving you and that a lot of you are telling your neighbors about us. And those neighbors, pleased in turn with an all-star magazine, are making us run the presses a little longer each month and convincing us beyond doubt that it pays to get "top-notchers" when you are making a magazine to sell. That being our business, you may expect each issue of the COSMOPOLITAN Magazine to be better than the last—the best that we can put together—*without regard to expense.*

The Best Christmas Present

WHAT are you going to give for Christmas? Wouldn't a practical suggestion come as a welcome relief? Well, then, how about a subscription to the COSMOPOLITAN? It is a reminder of the donor throughout the year. We mail the recipient of a gift subscription a beautifully illuminated subscription card,

Charles Edward Russell, who is preparing a red-hot series of articles exposing the cut-throat methods of our biggest trust, the Lumber Trust, to begin in the February Cosmopolitan



appropriately worded, containing the name of the donor. This is carefully timed to reach its destination on Christmas, no matter when the subscription reaches us.

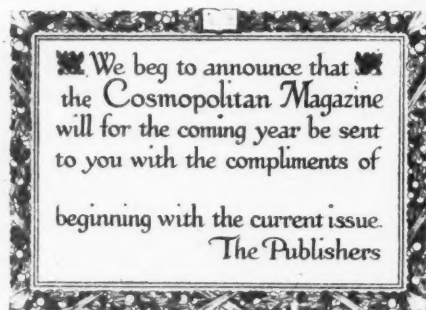
Just send us the names and addresses of those you wish to remember this way, with \$1.50 to cover each subscription, and say, "Gift subscription—send card." We will do the rest.

Good Things for January

WE don't like a month to pass without calling to your attention, very modestly, the great—really great—list of

contributors who are making for you "America's greatest magazine." Take a look at next month—January. The Chambers-Gibson, Phillips-Christy combinations, of course—either one big and interesting enough to make the success of any magazine published. You get both. Then Jack London with a corking "Smoke Bellew" story with Fischer's pictures; "Wallingford" at his best—the Chester-Chambers combination, you know; "Craig Kennedy" by Arthur B. Reeve—Will Foster drawings;

Bruno Lessing; the third Gouverneur Morris story of New York life, illustrated by James Montgomery Flagg; and a new chapter of an old success, "Letters to My Son," with some of the best pictures G. Patrick Nelson ever made; the cover by Harrison Fisher; and three unusual special articles, fully illustrated. A good layout? We think so. And we are sure you will agree with us after a look at the January issue.



This card, enlarged and beautifully printed in colors, will be sent with your name on it to those to whom you wish to give a year's subscription to the Cosmopolitan for Christmas.

Read what we say about it on this page of "Shop-Talk"

